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I

EXCHANGES AND CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN WEST AND THE MUSLIM WORLD: POLITICAL, MILITARY, ECONOMIC, INTELLECTUAL RELATIONS.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

This is a collection of some but not all of the papers from the "Table Ronde: Échanges et conflits entre l'Occident chrétien et le monde musulman: l'Occident chrétien, Relations politiques, militaires, économiques, intellectuelles," XXth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Paris, France, 21 August 2001. The authors have revised their respective papers in the light of comments they received at and after the actual session of the Round Table at the Congress. It regretfully is impossible to reproduce here any transcript or summary of the lively discussion that followed the delivery of the original papers.

The Editor.

LA FLOTTE BYZANTINE FACE A L'EXPANSION MUSULMANE. ASPECTS D'HISTOIRE INSTITUTIONNELLE ET SOCIALE (VII^e - X^e SIECLES)

Il est courant dans l'historiographie, d'envisager le développement de la marine de guerre byzantine comme ayant été poussé par l'expansion musulmane en Méditerranée. Cette opinion est probablement vraie en termes de longue durée, mais non en termes absolus. En effet, si la présence des Arabes en Méditerranée, au cours des siècles, a pu influencer les institutions navales byzantines, elle n'a pas été capable par elle-même de créer la marine de Byzance. L'empire de l'antiquité tardive possédait déjà une flotte de guerre. Aujourd'hui on a repoussé la thèse exprimée en 1939 par Christian Courtois, selon laquelle la marine romaine du IV^e au VI^e aurait pratiquement disparu¹, parce que l'empire, en cette période, n'avait pas d'ennemis sur mer. En réalité, à partir de Constantin, la flotte impériale s'adapta au système de défense régionale élaboré par la tétrarchie. Elle restreignit son champ d'action et changea sa fonction stratégique, ayant pour tâches principales l'appui à l'armée de terre et le patrouillage sur les fleuves². En raison de ses fonctions militaires, qui, paradoxalement, sont plus terrestres que maritimes, la marine de l'antiquité tardive modela ses structures d'organisation sur celles de

* Je voudrais remercier Mlle Noémi Herissey pour avoir corrigé mon français.

¹ Cf. Ch. Courtois, "Les politiques navales de l'Empire romain", *Revue Historique* 64 (1939), p. 259; Id., *Les Vandales et l'Afrique*, Paris 1955, p. 206.

² Cf. D. Kienast, *Untersuchungen zu dem Kriegsflotten der römischen Kaiserzeit*, Bonn 1966, pp. 125-157; M. Reddé, *Mare nostrum. Les infrastructures, le dispositif et l'histoire de la marine militaire sous l'empire romain*, Rome 1986, pp. 597-605; S. Cosentino, *Gaudiosus «draconarius»*. *La Sardegna bizantina attraverso un epitafio del secolo VI*, Bologna 1994, p. 30, n. 78 (Quaderni della Rivista di Bizantinistica, 13).

l'armée. Ces facteurs provoquèrent une diminution du tonnage des navires de guerre. Le *dromon* du VI^e siècle est un vaisseau très rapide, mais, contrairement à ce que l'on a écrit, très petit, que ce soit par rapport aux *standards* de l'époque du haut-empire, ou à ceux de l'époque medio-byzantine³. En tout cas, pendant l'antiquité tardive, l'empire fut en état de mettre sur mer même des flottes très nombreuses: dans la bataille sur l'Hellespont en 324 on compte 280 navires, en additionnant les bateaux de Constantin et ceux de Licinius⁴; en 468 l'empereur Léon I^{er} envoya contre les Vandales une très grande armée, qui comptait, selon Procope, 100.000 matelots embarqués sur des navires civils et militaires⁵; entre 523 et 526, Théodoric ordonna la construction de 1.000 *dromones*, à fonction annonaire et anti-vandale⁶; au cours de l'expédition africaine de Bélisaire, en 533-534, il y avait 92 navires militaires⁷; à la bataille navale de Senigallia, en 551, il y avait 97 vaisseaux de guerre, en additionnant les navires impériaux à ceux des Goths⁸.

La question est de savoir — si l'empire du IV^e au VI^e siècle possédait déjà une marine de guerre — quels sont les éléments qui caractérisent le passage entre la période proto-byzantine et la période medio-byzantine? En ce qui concerne le domaine de l'histoire institutionnelle, il semblerait facile de répondre: il s'agit de l'apparition de la flotte des Caravisiens. Malheureusement, notre documentation à ce sujet est pauvre, et ne permet pas une reconstruction exhaustive. D'abord, quand et pourquoi cette flotte des Caravisiens fut-elle créée? Notre première mention d'un stratège des Caravisiens (Σισίννιος στρατηγὸς τῶν καράβων), on le sait, est contenue dans le *Miracula sancti Demetri*. Les événements qui ont

³ Cf. S. Cosentino, "Per una nuova edizione dei Naumachica ambrosiani. Il de fluminibus traiciendis (Strat. XII B, 21)", *Bizantinistica. Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi*, n. s. 3 (2001), pp. 67-68.

⁴ Zos. *Hist.* II 23, 3 (ed. Paschoud).

⁵ Proc. *Bell. Vand.* I 6, 1 (edd. Haury-Wirth).

⁶ Cass. *Var.* II, 31; IV, 15; V, 16-20 (ed. Mommsen).

⁷ Proc. *Bell. Vand.* I 11, 15.

⁸ Proc. *Bell. Goth.* IV 23, 8-9, 12.

trait à cette flotte, ont été datés par Lemerle entre 678 et 685⁹. Il est donc assez probable que ce commandement ait été créé par Constans II (641-668) ou Constantin IV (668-685). En vertu du contexte historique des règnes de ces deux empereurs, les historiens ont voulu voir dans l'institution des Caravisiens la première tentative de réorganisation du pouvoir maritime byzantin face à la présence des Arabes dans la Méditerranée orientale¹⁰. La chronologie des premiers raids navals des Arabes contre l'empire, qui se sont déroulés sans interruption de 648/49 (Chypre; 649-650 Arados; 653-654 Chypre, Kos, Rhodes, Crète) à 655 (bataille des Mâts), permet de formuler l'hypothèse selon laquelle le commandement des Caravisiens aurait été mis en place après la paix conclue entre Constans II et Mu'âwiya en 659.

Si l'on s'accorde, dans l'historiographie, pour donner à la création des Caravisiens une fonction anti-arabe, ce n'est pas le cas en ce qui concerne la structure administrative de cette nouvelle institution. Les Caravisiens ont-ils été seulement un commandement militaire ou un véritable thème? Dans le passé je défendais la première hypothèse. Aujourd'hui, après un scrupuleux dépouillement de la première section de la *Prosopographie der mittel-byzantinischen Zeit*¹¹, je n'en suis plus certain. On peut réunir quatre témoignages concernant des officiels des Caravisiens s'échelonnant au long du VIII^e siècle: quatre stratèges et deux ἐκ προσώπου, c'est à dire, les représentants d'un

⁹ Cf. P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de saint Démétrius*, II, *Commentaire*, Paris 1981, pp. 161-162.

¹⁰ Cf. H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VII^e – XV^e siècles*, Paris 1966, pp. 19-24; H. Antoniadis-Bibicou, *Etudes d'histoire maritime de Byzance. A propos du thème de Caravisiens*, Paris 1966, pp. 79-80; E. Bickhoff, *Seekrieg und Seepolitik zwischen Islam und Abendland. Das Mittelmeer unter byzantinischer und arabischer Hegemonie (650-1040)*, Berlin 1966, pp. 82-83; T. G. Kolias, "Die byzantinische Kriegsmarine. Ihre Bedeutung im Verteidigungssystem von Byzanz", dans *Griechenland und das Meer*, hersg. von E. Chrysos, D. Letsios, H. A. Richter, R. Stupperich, Mannheim und Möhnsee 1999, pp. 133-134.

¹¹ Dorenavant abrégée *PmbZ*.

stratège¹². Mais le témoignage le plus intéressant, est un sceau daté par son éditeur, Lichačev¹³, de la première moitié du IX^e siècle, appartenant à Apelates πατρίκιος βασιλικὸς πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ στρατηγὸς τῶν Καραβησιανῶν; cette datation a été confirmée par les auteurs de la *PmbZ*¹⁴. Il est évident que, dans la première moitié du IX^e siècle, la mention d'un stratège ne peut se rapporter qu'à un thème. Toutefois, si les Caravisiens ont été un thème de l'empire, quelle fut son extension administrative ? Et, surtout, pourquoi ne sont-ils pas mentionnés dans le *Taktikon Uspensky* (moitié du IX^e siècle) ? En ce qui concerne la première interrogation, je pense qu'il faut remettre à jour l'intuition d' Agostino Pertusi dans son édition du *De thematibus*. Dans cette œuvre, à propos du thème de Samos, Constantin Porphyrogénète écrit que «quand fut effectuée la subdivision des thèmes, puisque l'île (de Samos) était très renommée, elle fut choisie comme métropole et centre du pouvoir (ἀρχή) du thème des navigants (θέμα τῶν πλωϊζομένων)»¹⁵. Or, il est évident, en lisant le texte du *De thematibus*, que ce passage ne se réfère pas au thème de Samos, mais à un événement qui eut lieu lors de la création des premiers thèmes. Par conséquent, on pourrait proposer l'hypothèse d'identifier, comme le fait Pertusi¹⁶, le θέμα τῶν πλωϊζομένων au thème des Caravisiens, pensant que le centre de ce dernier fût la même île de Samos. Mais il s'agit là seulement d'une

¹² Stratèges: Theophilos: *PmbZ*, n. 8176 = A. G. Savvides, "The Secular Prosopography of the Byzantine Maritime Theme of the Carabisians/Cibyrraeots", *Byzantinoslavica* 59, 1998, pp. 24-45 (dorenavant cité Savvides) n. 6 (710/711); Adrianos: *PmbZ*, n. 93 (première moitié du VIII^e s.); Anonymus: *PmbZ*, n. 10878 (première moitié du VIII^e s.); Anonymus: *Pmbz*, n. 10883 (première moitié du VIII^e s.) = Savvides, n. 4 (VII/VIII s.). *Ek prosōpou*: Anonymus: *PmbZ*, n. 10809 = Savvides, n. 5 (VII^e/VIII^e s.); Theodotos: *PmbZ*, n. 7933 (VIII^e s.)

¹³ Cf. Lichačev, *Molivdovuly grčeskogo Vostoka, sostavitel' i avtor kommentariiev* V. S. Šandrovskaja, Moscou 1991, p. 144 cité dans *PmbZ*, n. 575.

¹⁴ Cf. *PmbZ*, n. 575.

¹⁵ «ὅτε γοῦν ἐγένετο ὁ μερισμὸς τῶν θεμάτων, διὰ τὸ εἶναι ἐπιφανεστάτην τὴν νῆσον, μετρόπολιν αὐτὴν καὶ ἀρχὴν τοῦ θέματος τῶν πλωϊζομένων τεθεῖκασιν»: Costantino Porfirogenito *De thematibus*, introduzione, testo critico, commento a c. di A. Pertusi, Città del Vaticano 1952, p. 81, 7-19.

¹⁶ Costantino Porfirogenito, op. cit., pp. 153-154

hypothèse. Quoi qu'il en soit, il est difficile de répondre à la seconde question, c'est à dire, pourquoi ce thème supposé des Caravisiens n'est-il pas cité dans le *Taktikon Uspensky*. Comme on le voit, le problème des Caravisiens demeure irrésolu.

Le premier thème maritime de l'empire sûrement attesté, est donc celui des Cibyrrhéotes. En 697 nous avons mention d'un drongaire des Cibyrrhéotes¹⁷; en 732 nos sources parlent d'un stratège¹⁸. A ce sujet, je partage l'opinion de M^{me} Ahrweiler, en affirmant que ce thème a été créé pour des raisons politiques par Léon III, lequel, immédiatement après son accession au trône, divisa le commandement (ou le thème) des Caravisiens en deux parties. La disposition fut prise pour diminuer le pouvoir du stratège des Caravisiens, qui, dans la lutte contre Anastase II, se rangea à côté de ce dernier¹⁹. Entre la fin du VII^e et la première moitié du IX^e siècle sont aussi attestés un drongaire de Malte²⁰, un drongaire de Seleucie²¹, deux drongaires de l'Aigaion Pelagos²², un drongaire de l'Hellas²³, un drongaire de Kôds²⁴, un drongaire du Kolpos²⁵, un drongaire de Christopolis (Kavala)²⁶, et, peut-être, un drongaire de Sardaigne²⁷. Dans la seconde moitié du IX^e

¹⁷ Il s'agit de Apsimar δρουγγάριος τῶν Κυβυραιωτῶν, devenu empereur après le 15 février 698 sous le nom de Tibère II, cf. *PmbZ*, n. 8483; Savvides, n. 3.

¹⁸ Il s'agit de Manes στρατηγὸς τῶν Κυβυραιωτῶν, cf. *PmbZ*, n. 4690; Savvides, n. 8.

¹⁹ Cf. Ahrweiler, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.

²⁰ Nicétas δρουγγάριος καὶ ἄρχων Μελέτης; *PmbZ*, n. 5358 (VIIe-VIIIe s.).

²¹ Sisinnios βασιλικὸς σπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος Σελευκείας; *PmbZ*, n. 6772 (VIIIe s.).

²² Sisinnios ὕπατος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ Αἰγαίου Πέλαγους; *PmbZ*, n. 6773 (VIII^e s.); Arkoulis βασιλικὸς σπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ Αἰγαίου Πέλαγους; *PmbZ*, n. 166 (VIII^e/IX^e s.).

²³ Basile δρουγγάριος τῆς Ἑλλάδος; *PmbZ*, n. 857 (VIII^e s.).

²⁴ Leon βασιλικὸς κανδίδατος καὶ δρουγγάριος τῆς Κῶ; *PmbZ*, n. 4528 (VIII^e/IX^e s.).

²⁵ Michel βασιλικὸς σπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ κόλπου; *PmbZ*, n. 5109 (IX^e s.).

²⁶ Leon βασιλικὸς σπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος Χριστοπόλεως; *PmbZ*, n. 4482 (IX^e s.).

²⁷ Cf. P. G. Spanu, *La Sardegna bizantina tra VI e VII secolo*, Oristano 1998, pp. 92-95, surtout p. 92, n. 441.

siècle le drongariat de l'Aigaion Pelagos fut promu au rang de thème et²⁸, toujours dans la même période, fut institué le thème de Samos²⁹. A côté de ces flottes thématiques, nous avons la flotte stationnant dans la capitale, Constantinople. On trouve des attestations au sujet de ses premiers commandants à partir d'une période comprise entre la seconde moitié du VIII^e siècle et la première moitié du IX^e siècle³⁰. Par conséquent, dès la seconde moitié du VIII^e siècle, la force navale de Byzance s'articula, comme celle de terre, dans la bipartition entre flotte centrale (βασιλικὸν πλοῖμον) et flotte thématique (θεματικὸς στόλος) qu'elle connaîtra jusqu'au la fin du XI^e siècle.

Les Arabes, ont-ils conditionné la formation d'une structure institutionnelle semblable? Il est indubitable que la création de commandements unifiés pour la marine, tels quels les Caravisiens, le thème de Cibyrrhéotes et le drongariat de la flotte impériale, aient été constitués surtout pour protéger l'empire contre les raids maritimes des Sarrasins. Mais, en même temps, nous ne devons pas oublier

²⁸ Cf. Ahrweiler, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-79, 99; E. Malmut, *Les îles de l'empire byzantin, VIIIe-XIe siècles*, I, Paris 1988, p. 311.

²⁹ Cf. Ahrweiler, *op. cit.*, p. 99; Malmut, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

³⁰ Entre le VIII^e et le IX^e siècle: Jean βασιλικὸς σπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ βασιλικοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 3141); Leon χαρτουλάριος τοῦ βασιλικοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 4385). Première moitié du IX^e siècle: Hypatios βασιλικὸς ἄρχων τοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 2619); Constantin πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 3956); Nicéte πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ βασιλικοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 5484). Seconde moitié du IX^e siècle: Basile πατρικίος βασιλικὸς πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ βασιλικοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 966); Jean πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ πλοῖμου (entre 859 et 867, cf. *PmbZ*, n. 3309) Michel βασιλικὸς σπαθαροκανδίδατος καὶ κόμης τοῦ βασιλικοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 5128); Nicéte σπαθάριος καὶ τοποτηρητής τοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 5478); Nicéte πατρικίος βασιλικὸς πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ βασιλικοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 5512). Au IX^e siècle: Andreas κόμης τοῦ βασιλικοῦ πλοῖμου βάνδου τρίτου (*PmbZ*, n. 417); Andreas βασιλικὸς πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 411); Aimilianos βασιλικὸς σπαθάριος καὶ τοποτηρητής τῶν πλοῖμων (*PmbZ*, n. 154); Michel βασιλικὸς κανδίδατος καὶ δρουγγάριος τοῦ βασιλικοῦ πλοῖμου (*PmbZ*, n. 5099).

qu'une telle bipartition des forces, entre centre et périphérie, ne caractérise pas seulement la marine, mais toute la structure militaire de l'empire aux VIII^e-X^e siècles. Cette dialectique administrative entre Constantinople et ses provinces est le résultat du démembrement de l'empire et d'un climat de guerre, qui oblige les *basileis* à valoriser les ressources des sociétés locales, en accroissant en même temps leur contrôle sur celles-ci. Dans ce processus, les Arabes ont été seulement l'une des forces, quoique très importante, ayant agi comme stimulant pour l'empire; mais on en trouve aussi bien d'autres, comme les Slaves, Bulgares, Francs, Khazars, et Russes.

On peut se demander, jusqu'à quel point l'apparition de commandements militaires maritimes, se traduira dans la constitution d'une classe militaire propre à la marine. L'impression qu'on a, en lisant les sources, est que, du bas au milieu de la hiérarchie militaire, la spécialisation grandit, mais qu'elle atteint à peine les hauts rangs. Bien sûr, nous avons des exemples de personnes qui, grâce à leur capacité dans l'art de la navigation, ont parcouru tous les degrés de la hiérarchie militaire, jusqu'à devenir stratèges. Tel est, par exemple, le cas de Jean Podaron, un des *πρωτελάται* (chefs de l'équipage) des vaisseaux au service personnel de Basile I^{er}. Après sa conduite héroïque pendant une expédition militaire, ce Jean gagna d'abord la dignité de *πρωτοσπαθάριος τῆς φιάλης*, avant d'être promu au rang de stratège de Cybirrhéotes³¹. La même carrière fut parcourue par Romain Lécapène, futur empereur; d'abord *πρωτοκάραβος* ou capitaine de l'un des vaisseaux réservés à la cour; puis stratège de Samos; enfin, drongaire de la flotte³². Le chapitre 51 du *De administrando imperio* témoigne du fait que les membres des équipages des *ἀγράρια* et des *βασιλικά δρομώνια* (les navires réservés au service personnel de l'empereur) étaient choisis parmi les

³¹ Cf. Constantine Porphyrogenitus *De Administrando Imperio*, Greek Text edited by G. Moravcsik, English Translation by R. J. H. Jenkins, Budapest 1949, ch. 51, 73-132 (pp. 249-253).

³² Cf. R. Guiland, "Le Drongaire de la flotte, le Grand drongaire de la flotte, le Duc de la flotte, le Mégaduc", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 44, 1951, p. 217 (= Id., *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines*, I, Berlin-Amsterdam 1967, p. 538).

meilleurs matelots de la marine; quelques uns d'entre eux devenait τοποτηρητῇ de la flotte impériale³³. Les Mardaïtes, ces «marins très expérimentés» (οἱ τῶν Μαρδαϊτῶν δόκιμοι πλευστικοί), comme le stipule un texte peu connu du IX^e ou du X^e siècle³⁴, disposaient de leurs propres officiers³⁵, lesquels devaient avoir quelque connaissance de la guerre sur mer. Néanmoins, si nous examinons la personnalité des chefs des grandes flottes mises en mer par Byzance entre le VII^e et le X^e siècles, nous découvrirons que la plupart d'entre eux n'avait pas d'expérience particulière de la guerre maritime. En 655, au cours de la bataille des Mâts, à la tête de la flotte byzantine se trouva le même empereur Constans II. En 713-714, l'empereur Anastase II confiait à Jean — qui était diacre et logothète — le commandement de la flotte qui devait détruire les chantiers navals des Arabes en Lycie³⁶. L'Ooryphas qui commandait l'expédition contre la Crète, en 827-829, était drongaire de la veille (δρουγγάριος τῆς βίγλης)³⁷. Le patrice Theoctiste qui mena l'expédition contre la Crète en 843 était ἐπὶ τοῦ κανικλείου et logothète du drome³⁸. Le Nasar, nommé drongaire de la flotte impériale sous le règne de Michel III, avait été stratège des Buccellaires³⁹. Nicétas Ooryphas, commandant de la flotte qui fut envoyé par Basile I^{er}, en 867, en Italie méridionale contre les Arabes, avait été préfet de Constantinople⁴⁰. Le

³³ Tel est le cas du πρωτοσπαθάριος Léon l'Arménien, cf. Constantine Porphyrogenitus *De Administrando Imperio*, pp. 248, 250, 252.

³⁴ S. Lampros, "Τρία κείμενα συμβάλλοντα εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν τοῦ ναυτικοῦ παρὰ τοῖς Βυζαντινοῖς", *Neos Hellēnomnēmon*, 9, 1912, p. 171 (texte n. 2, l. 20). Ce texte, qui est une sorte de guide de météorologie pour les navigants, nous a été transmis par le cod. *Marc.* 335 avec un autre texte sur le même thème, cf. R. H. Dolley, "Meteorology in the Byzantine Navy", *The Mariner's Mirror*, 37/1, 1951, pp. 5-16 et G. Dagron, "Das Firmament soll christlich werden. Zu zwei Seefahrtskalendern des 10. Jahrhunderts", dans *Fest und Alltag in Byzanz*, hersg. von G. Prinzing und D. Simon, München 1977, pp. 145-156.

³⁵ Il s'agit du κατεπάνω τῶν Μαρδαϊτῶν cf. Ahrweiler, *op. cit.*, pp. 108, 399.

³⁶ Cf. *PmbZ*, n. 2961.

³⁷ Cf. *PmbZ*, nn. 5654, 5655.

³⁸ Cf. *PmbZ*, n. 8050.

³⁹ Cf. *PmbZ*, n. 5227.

⁴⁰ Cf. *PmbZ*, n. 5503.

commandant de l'expédition navale de 911, Himerios, était logothète du drome⁴¹. Le chef de la flotte envoyé en 949 contre la Crète, Constantin Gongylas, était un cubiculaire «qui ignorait tout des choses de la guerre»⁴². Enfin, le futur empereur Nicéphore Phokas, avant de devenir chef de la grande flotte qui reconquerra en 960 l'île de Crète, était domestique des scholes.

On dira que la présence de chefs dépourvus de toute préparation technique, que l'on trouve à la tête des grandes expéditions militaires, est une caractéristique bien connue dans toute l'histoire byzantine, surtout durant la première période. Ce phénomène ne concerne pas seulement la flotte, mais aussi l'armée de terre. Il s'explique par la possibilité qu'a l'empereur de conférer directement le pouvoir militaire aux hommes de son entourage, en laissant de côté toute préparation technique. Mais pour les commandements de la marine, il y a plus: il y a presque absence de tout vocabulaire spécifique. Nous lisons souvent dans nos traductions de textes byzantins le terme d'«amiral» pour signifier le commandant d'une flotte. Mais le mot qui est, le plus souvent, utilisé par nos sources à ce propos, c'est *στρατηγός*. Cela se vérifie non seulement dans la littérature érudite ou hagiographique, mais aussi, et surtout, dans les traités militaires: ceux de Maurice, Syrianos, Léon VI et Nicéphore Ouranos; tous ceux-ci appellent *στρατηγός* le chef de la flotte. Le terme drongaire est employé soit pour un officiel de la marine, soit pour un officiel de l'armée de terre. Il existe donc une seule notion théorique de pouvoir militaire, dont le statut culturel a été conçu avant toute chose pour l'armée de terre.

La marine de guerre byzantine atteindra le sommet de son importance au X^e siècle, grâce au rôle qu'elle revêtit dans l'offensive menée pour reconquérir la Crète, Chypre et la Sicile. Le chapitre 44

⁴¹ Cf. Guiland, "Le Drongaire de la flotte", p. 216 (= p. 537).

⁴² Cf. R. Guiland, "Les patrices byzantins sous le règne de Constantin VII Porphyrogénète (913-959)", *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici* 9, 1957, p. 200 (= Id., *Recherches sur les institutions de l'empire byzantin*, II, Berlin-Amsterdam 1967, p. 186).

du II livre du *De caerimoniis*, comme on le sait, nous a transmis les listes des navires et des effectifs qui ont participé aux campagnes militaires de 911 et 949. Abstraction faite du contenu de ces listes, lesquelles ont été récemment ré-éditées et commentées par J. Haldon⁴³, il vaut la peine de souligner que la grandeur de tels préparatifs, a fait apparaître aux yeux de la classe dirigeante byzantine, de façon inédite, l'importance de la flotte pour la politique de l'empire. On ne retrouvera jamais le cas, comme au cours du X^e siècle, de voir monter sur le trône de Byzance un empereur provenant des rangs de la flotte, comme ce fut pour Romain Lécapène, qui représente un cas à peu près unique dans toute l'histoire de Byzance. Ce n'est pas un hasard, si c'est justement au X^e siècle qu'a été compilé le seul corpus des *Naumachica* que nous a transmis la littérature byzantine. En 968 Nicéphore Phokas, pouvait orgueilleusement affirmer à Liutprand de Crémone, après la reconquête de la Crète, de Chypre, et des victoires navales contre les Russes, que «je suis le seul à avoir la maîtrise de la mer»⁴⁴.

La perception que le monde byzantin eut des Arabes et de l'Islam, ne fut pas univoque. D'une part, on a un jugement fortement négatif, fondé sur la polémique théologique et nourrie sur le champ de bataille, qui voit dans le musulman le principal ennemi de l'empire. L'image de l'«Arabe» devient une catégorie négative, qui est même utilisée en fonction de la lutte politique à l'intérieur de Byzance⁴⁵; pensons, par exemple, à la figure de Léon III, celui «qui gouverne avec la mentalité

⁴³ J. Haldon, "Theory and Practice in the Tenth-Century Military Administration. Chapters II, 44 and 45 of the Book of Ceremonies", *Travaux et Mémoires* 13, 2000, pp. 201-352.

⁴⁴ «Nec est in mari domino tuo classium numerus. Navigantium fortitudo mihi soli inest, qui eum classibus aggrediar, bello maritimas eius civitates demoliar, et quae fluminibus sunt vicina, redigam in favillam»; cf. Liutprandi *Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana*, 11 ed. J. Becker (MGH, *Scriptores ad usum scholarum*, 41, Hannoverae 1915).

⁴⁵ Cf. N. A. Koutrakou, "The Image of the Arabs in Middle Byzantine Politics. A Study in the Enemy Principle (8th-10th Centuries)", *Graeco-Arabica* 5, 1993, pp. 213-224.

des Arabes» (Ἀραβικῶ φρονήματι κρατυνόμενος)⁴⁶ pour les iconophiles; ou à celle de Thomas le Slave, accusé par le parti de Michel III de vouloir livrer l'empire aux Arabes⁴⁷. D'autre part, l'Islam est victorieux militairement, entre le VIII^e et le IX^e siècle, et on ne peut pas rester indifférent à ces succès. C'est ainsi qu'il devient non seulement un adversaire, mais aussi un adversaire à qui on doit le respect. En 913/914 Nicolas Mistikos, patriarche de Constantinople, écrivit sa fameuse lettre au calife Al-Muqtadir, dans laquelle le pouvoir des Byzantins et celui des Sarrasins sont mis sur le même plan politique; les rapports entre ces deux seigneuries universelles, selon le patriarche, devraient tendre à la fraternité et non à l'extranéité à cause de leurs différences religieuses et civiles⁴⁸. En lisant le prologue de cette lettre, il semble que l'on soit revenu aux temps de la correspondance entre Maurice et le roi des rois Khusraw II. Léon VI, frappé par le nombre de musulmans qui participaient volontairement à la guerre contre les Byzantins, et par la manière avec laquelle les non-combattants aidaient financièrement les combattants, souhaitait, dans ses «Constitutions Tactiques», le même esprit de coopération entre les différentes classes sociales de l'empire⁴⁹. Léon semble aussi admirer la tension religieuse qui anime les Arabes, poussés à combattre pour leur foi dans l'attente d'une récompense dans l'au-delà, en cas de mort au combat. On entrevoit bien, dans les considérations du sage empereur, le fond de la théorie du *djihâd*⁵⁰. D'après son expérience en combattant contre les Arabes, un autre empereur, Nicéphore Phokas, essaya de garantir aux soldats byzantins morts au combat les mêmes honneurs qu'aux martyrs.

⁴⁶ Theoph. Chron., p. 410, 9-10 (ed. De Boor).

⁴⁷ Cf. Koutrakou, "The Image of the Arabs", p. 220.

⁴⁸ Cf. Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople, *Letters*, Greek Text and English Translation by R. J. H. Jenkins – L. G. Westerink, Washington D. C. 1973, n. 1, 16-22 (p. 2).

⁴⁹ Cf. T. Kolias, "The Taktika of Leo VI and the Arabs", *Graeco-Arabica*, 3, 1984, p. 134.

⁵⁰ Cf. G. Dagron, "Byzance et le modèle islamique au Xe siècle. À propos des Constitutions Tactiques de l'empereur Léon VI", *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Comptes Rendus*, Avril-Juin 1983, pp. 223-224, 232.

Mais son projet échoua face à la résistance de l'Eglise et de l'aristocratie civile de la capitale⁵¹.

Dans le domaine de la guerre sur mer, il ne semble pas que la société islamique ait représenté une référence pour Byzance. Les deux dispositifs militaires étaient à peu près équivalents, ni l'un, ni l'autre n'ayant réussi aux VII^e – IX^e siècles à supplanter l'autre. Toutefois, on a l'impression que, dans le domaine maritime, il s'opéra un subtil renversement de modèles que ces deux mondes représentaient l'un pour l'autre. En l'occurrence, c'est Byzance qui détient un rôle prééminent, pas le contraire. Ce *leadership* n'est pas soutenu par le nombre des batailles navales gagnées par les Byzantins ou par une meilleure typologie des constructions navales; mais plutôt par une supériorité liée à la stratégie, à la technologie, au ravitaillement en bois et, peut-être, au recrutement des équipages. Il y a seulement quelques indices, mais qui me paraissent significatifs.

Dans le paragraphe 72 de sa XIX^{ème} constitution tactique dédiée à la guerre maritime, Léon le Sage écrit que nombre des usages (ἐπιτηδεύματα) élaborés par les anciens n'avaient pas été exposés dans son traité. L'empereur justifie son omission, en alléguant des raisons de brièveté, et en soutenant que l'ennemi aurait pu apprendre l'un de ceux-ci et en faire usage contre les flottes impériales. Les ruses de guerre, continue-t-il, ne doivent pas être annoncées jusqu'au moment de leur réalisation⁵². Comme devons-nous interpréter ce passage ? Il pourrait être seulement un hommage érudit à la tradition de Polyen; ou, au contraire, il pourrait être une tentative de l'empereur de préserver de l'espionnage arabe⁵³ quelques stratagèmes réellement appliqués par les commandants byzantins. En tous les cas, je voudrais souligner que quelques passages des *Naumachica* de Léon VI ont sûrement été traduits en arabe par Ibn al-Manqalî, un officiel mamelouk du XIV^e siècle, comme il a bien été démontré par V.

⁵¹ Dagron, "Byzance et le modèle islamique", p. 231.

⁵² Cf. Leon. *Naum.*, 72 (p. 31) ed. A. Dain, Paris 1943

⁵³ Sur ce sujet cf. V. Christides, "Military Intelligence in Arabo-Byzantine Naval Warfare", dans *To εμπόλεμο Βυζάντιο (9ος - 12ος αι.)*, Αθήνα 1997, pp. 269-281.

Christides⁵⁴. Par conséquent, alors qu'il est probable que les Arabes aient usé de manuels de guerre byzantins, la réciproque n'a encore jamais été prouvée. A propos des tactiques utilisées par les Sarrasins dans la guerre sur mer, Léon ne dit rien de particulier, et se contente de souligner qu'ils résistent vigoureusement à la première attaque des ennemis, après quoi, quand ceux-ci ont terminé de jeter flèches, pierres et javelots, ils les attaquent corps à corps⁵⁵.

On sait que dans les combats navals du moyen âge oriental, on faisait usage de plusieurs types de liquides inflammables. Parmi ceux-ci, le feu grégeois était certainement l'un des plus redoutables. Il est très probable que les Arabes ne le possédèrent jamais, bien qu'ils en aient détenu d'autres⁵⁶. En ce qui concerne le ravitaillement en bois pour la construction des navires, les Byzantins pouvaient compter sur les forêts de l'Asie Mineure, de la Crète, des côtes méridionales de la mer Noire, de l'Epire du nord, de la Dalmatie, de la Calabre⁵⁷, tandis que les Arabes ne pouvaient se ravitailler que grâce aux forêts de Syrie du nord, du Liban et de l'anti-Liban⁵⁸. En 996 'Isâ ibn Nestorius, vizir du calife fatimide Imâm al- 'Azîz (975-996), dut ordonner d'utiliser le bois des portes de la Monnaie du Caire et des

⁵⁴ Cf. V. Christides, "Ibn al-Manqalî (Manglî) and Leo VI: New Evidence on Arabo-Byzantine Ship Construction and Naval Warfare", *Byzantinoslavica* 1995, pp. 83-96; Id., "Naval Warfare in the Eastern Mediterranean (6th-14th Century). An Arabic Translation of Leo VI's Naumachica", *Graeco-Arabica* 3, 1984, pp. 137-148.

⁵⁵ Leon. *Naum.* 15, 16.

⁵⁶ Cf. Y. Lev, "The Fâtimid Navy, Byzantium and The Mediterranean Sea, 909-1036 C.E / 297-427 A. H.", *Byzantion* 54/1, 1984, pp. 246-247; A. M. Fahmy, *Muslim Sea-Power in the Eastern Mediterranean from the Seventh to the Tenth Century A. D.*, Cairo 1966, pp. 158-160. Cf. aussi T. K. Korres, « Ὑγρὸν πῦρ ». Ἐνα ὄπλο της βυζαντινῆς ναυτικῆς τακτικῆς, *Θεσσαλονίκη* 1995³, pp. 60-72. Je ne suis pas réussi à me procurer le travail de Ch. G. Makrypoulias, "Muslim ships through Byzantine eyes" dans *Aspects of Arab seafaring. An attempt to fill the gaps of maritime history* by Y. Al-Hijji - V. Christides, Athens 2002.

⁵⁷ Cf. Antoniadis Bibicou, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

⁵⁸ Cf. A. M. Fahmy, *Muslim Naval Organisation in the Eastern Mediterranean from the Seventh to the Tenth Century A. D.*, Cairo 1966², pp. 75-80.

structures de l'hôpital tulunide de cette ville, pour la construction de 20 vaisseaux de guerre⁵⁹.

A propos du recrutement dans la flotte militaire, on sait qu'il était redouté par les populations locales de l'empire byzantin. On rappellera, juste à titre d'exemple, le fameux épisode de la Vie de saint Nil le Jeune, dans lequel les habitants de Rossano, en Calabre, refusèrent de s'embarquer, brûlèrent les navires que le *magistros* Nicéphore avait fait construire et massacrèrent les pilotes⁶⁰. Le problème était, j'y reviendrai, que le service dans la marine ne représentait aucun attrait. Mais il en était de même pour le monde musulman. Les papyrus de l'Égypte ommyade démontrent qu'au début du VIII^e siècle le service de rameur dans le *caraboi* était obligatoire; les populations rurales préféraient le racheter par une contribution en argent⁶¹. Les Fatimides aussi eurent des difficultés pour le recrutement des équipages⁶². Au contraire, l'empire byzantin pouvait compter sur la main-d'œuvre de plusieurs peuples étrangers, comme les Russes, les Latins, les Dalmates, et, surtout le Mardaïtes⁶³.

Nous avons vu qu'en 968, Nicéphore Phokas revendiquait orgueilleusement la maîtrise de la mer que possédait alors l'empire. Mais, à peine soixante-dix ans plus tard environ, en 1043, une flottille russe réussit à attaquer Constantinople sans qu'aucun vaisseau impérial ne fît face à elle⁶⁴, tandis qu'en 1081 Alexis I^{er} devait appeler à l'aide des navires vénitiens pour combattre contre les Normands. En un siècle, toute puissance navale byzantine paru disparaître. A partir

⁵⁹ Cf. Lev, "The Fâtimid Navy", p. 242.

⁶⁰ Vita S. Nili Junioris, P. G. CXX, c. 105 B.

⁶¹ Cf. V. Christides, "Continuation and changes in Umayyad Egypt as reflected in the terms and titles of the Greek papyri", *Graeco-Arabica* 4, 1991, pp. 57-59; Fahmy, *Muslim Naval Organisation*, p. 101.

⁶² Lev, "The Fâtimid Navy", p. 249.

⁶³ Cf. Ahrweiler, *op. cit.*, pp. 397-407.

⁶⁴ Cf. Ahrweiler, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-129.

de la seconde moitié du XI^e siècle, le θεματικὸς στόλος déchet; la présence d'une force navale dans l'empire fut pour la plus grande partie assurée par la flotte de Constantinople⁶⁵.

La décadence de la flotte des thèmes s'inscrit dans un processus plus général de restructuration de la société byzantine au XI^e siècle, avec la croissance de l'influence des aristocraties au détriment du pouvoir impérial. Ce phénomène se traduit par un affaiblissement de la classe rurale qui avait été l'épine dorsale du système thématique. Le parti de l'aristocratie civile, qui gouverna à Constantinople depuis la mort de Basile II jusqu'au commencement du règne d'Alexis I^{er}, mena une politique de fiscalisation progressive des obligations militaires, qui accéléra l'introduction des mercenaires dans l'armée byzantine. Mais, tandis que l'armée de terre se transforma en une force professionnelle, conduisant à son apogée un phénomène qui avait déjà débuté au siècle précédent, la marine de guerre fut négligée et subit une véritable décadence⁶⁶. Se vérifia alors le paradoxe, mis en évidence par E. Malamut⁶⁷, qu'à mesure que l'empire, entre XI^e et XII^e siècles, accentue son caractère maritime, sa flotte s'affaiblit.

Cependant, les Byzantins étaient conscients de l'importance d'avoir une marine de guerre. C'est juste au XI^e siècle que Kékauménos écrivit, en s'adressant à l'empereur, qu'il devait s'appliquer pour avoir une flotte toujours puissante, car «la flotte est la gloire de la Romania»⁶⁸. Comment pouvons-nous expliquer cette contradiction ? Pourquoi la marine byzantine a-t-elle toujours eu un rôle de moindre importance en comparaison de l'armée de terre, et cela malgré la dimension géopolitique maritime de l'empire ? Car il est indubitable que le service en marine était perçu comme étant moins prestigieux et moins qualifiant que le service dans l'armée de terre.

⁶⁵ Cf. Ahrweiler, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-135.

⁶⁶ Ahrweiler, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-162.

⁶⁷ Cf. E. Malamut, "Les insulaires des 10^e - 12^e siècles: marins ou soldats ?", *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 32, 1982, pp. 63-71 (= XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Wien, 4.-9. Oktober 1981, Akten).

⁶⁸ Ceccum, *Strat.* 87, 19 (= p. 292) ed. Litavrin (ὁ γὰρ στόλος ἐστὶν ἡ δόξα τῆς Ῥωμανίας).

Cela est prouvé, tout d'abord, par le rang relativement bas réservé au drongaire de la flotte impériale et aux stratèges des thèmes maritimes; ensuite, par le très petit nombre d'officiers de la marine étant devenu empereurs; enfin, par le peu de littérature militaire concernant les *naumachica*.

On peut répondre à cette question, en considérant, d'abord, la manière avec laquelle la mentalité byzantine envisageait la mer. Les textes hagiographiques démontrent que cette mentalité était empreinte d'une conception, trouvant ses racines dans la Bible⁶⁹, selon laquelle la mer était conçue comme un élément perfide et périlleux. C'est surtout la variabilité des forces marines qui est difficile à la psychologie de l'homme byzantin, par l'imprévisibilité qui lui est inhérente. On cherche à «christianiser» la météorologie⁷⁰; on cherche à assigner à chaque astre du firmament le nom d'un saint, mettant dans les mains de ces puissants intercesseurs le destin de la navigation. C'est ainsi que nous avons l'étoile de saint Basile, de saint Jean le Théologien, de la Vraie Croix, de saint Démétrius, de saint Thomas, de sainte Thècle, de sainte Marie, de saint Philippe⁷¹. Dans la vie de Phantinos de Tauriana, qui est connu comme protecteur de navigants, le saint apaise une tempête en frappant les ondes de la mer de sa cravache⁷². Léon le Sage, dans ses *Naumachica*, souligne que le bon commandant d'une flotte doit avoir des connaissances en météorologie s'il veut se garder des tempêtes⁷³. Quoiqu'il en soit, dans la mentalité des Byzantins, la profondeur de la mer reste quelque

⁶⁹ Ps. 69, 3; Jon. 2, 6-7; Is. 5, 30; 17, 12-13; 57, 20; Jud., 13; Da. 7, 3; Ap. 13, 1.

⁷⁰ Cf. Dagron, "Das Firmament soll christlich werden", cité à n. 34.

⁷¹ Cf. les deux textes cités *supra* à n. 34.

⁷² Cf. A. Acconcia Longo, "L'antichità pagana nell'agiografia italogreca di età iconoclasta", dans *O Ιταλιώτης Ελληνισμός από τον Ζ στον ΙΒ αιώνα. Μνήμη Νίκου Παναγιωτάκη / L'ellenismo italoita dal VII al XII secolo. Alla memoria di Nikos Panagiotakis*, Αθήνα, p. 15, n. 82. Autres exemples cf. S. Cosentino, "Re Teoderico costruttore di flotte" dans *Antiquité Tardive*, 2005, n. 78, à paraître; voir aussi M. E. Mullet, *In peril on sea: travel genres and the unexpected in Travel in the Byzantine world*, Aldershot 2002.

⁷³ Leon. *Naum.*, 2.

chose d'effrayant, un territoire obscur, qui s'oppose à la limpidité du ciel et à l'élévation du paradis. Dans la Jérusalem céleste, après le dernier renouvellement du monde, la mer n'existera plus⁷⁴.

La culture de l'aristocratie byzantine, qui était économiquement liée à la terre, regardait avec peu d'intérêt la vie maritime. Le monde de la navigation, indissolublement lié au commerce et à l'innovation technologique, était étranger au conservatisme culturel des élites byzantines. En outre, la vie quotidienne en elle-même à bord d'un navire, était de fort peu d'attrait pour le service en marine, entre la promiscuité existant entre officiers et matelots d'une part, et le péril qu'elle représentait en cas de conflit, d'autre part. On peut percevoir l'écho d'une telle perspective dans les mots de l'auteur anonyme qui composa les *naumachica* commissionnés par le *parakoimomenos* Basile. Il vaut la peine de rappeler tout de suite ce qu'il écrit dans le proème de l'œuvre: «tandis que, dans les formations de troupes terrestres, sont engagés surtout les humbles, les inférieurs, et très peu les puissants, puisque chacun d'entre eux ne songe qu'à ses propres intérêts et à son propre salut, ou contraire, dans les formations de la marine, il arrive que le noble ait le même sort que le plébéien, en coulant avec lui au fond (de la mer); et même dans le cas où (le puissant), ayant compris (le péril), essaierait de le prévenir, il ne pourrait rien faire de différent du faible»⁷⁵. Dans cette perspective «démocratisante», le service en marine allie le destin des puissants à celui des faibles. Elle est sans doute l'expression de la politique sociale des empereurs macédoniens, mais elle ne devait pas être partagée par l'aristocratie militaire. Une bataille sur mer, beaucoup plus qu'une bataille sur terre, privait cette classe de la possibilité de

⁷⁴ Ap. 21, 1.

⁷⁵ Cf. Ad Basilium patricium *naumachica*, proem. 3 (ed. Dain): « συμβαίνει γάρ ἐν μὲν ταῖς κατ' ἡπειρον παρατάξεσιν πλείονας κατέχεσθαι τοὺς χείρονας, ἐλάττονας δὲ ἢ καὶ πάνυ βραχεῖς τοὺς κρείττονας, ἐκάστου τὴν οἰκείαν καὶ μόνον σωτηρίαν μηχανωμένου τε καὶ ἐπιτηδεύοντος ἐν δὲ ταῖς κατὰ θάλασσαν ὅμα τῷ ἀγενεῖ καὶ ὁ γενναῖος πεσεῖται καὶ καταδύσει ἐν τῷ βυθῷ ἢ καὶ ὑποφθάσει καταληφθεὶς μηδὲν τὸ πλεον τοῦ ἀσθενοῦς ἐνδειξάμενος ».

s'enfuir, de tenter de négocier avec l'ennemi, ou de mettre en œuvre tous les moyens dont elle disposait pour faire valoir les privilèges de son rang social. Pour les faibles aussi, la vie à bord d'un navire devait être fort peu séduisante. Surtout pour les rameurs, l'enrôlement en marine représentait l'introduction dans une couche sociale proche de l'état servile. Bien sûr, comme tout service militaire, elle pouvait aussi être un moyen de s'élever dans la hiérarchie sociale. Toutefois la flotte, en comparaison de l'armée de terre, offrait plus de risque et moins d'argent.

Le destin de la marine de guerre à Byzance, était en quelque sorte déjà inscrit dans la culture de ses habitants. Le long conflit avec les Arabes obligea l'empire à réformer l'organisation institutionnelle de la flotte et à modifier les types de navires de guerre, mais ne changea pas son statut inférieur par rapport à l'armée de terre. Cette situation datant de l'antiquité tardive, ne fut pas changée dans la période medio-byzantine. Pendant les quatre siècles de guerre avec les Arabes l'élite byzantine s'efforça d'imposer sa thalassocratie dans la Méditerranée et elle y parvint finalement. Elle gagna une thalassocratie, qui, paradoxalement, n'était pas nourrie d'une vraie thalassophilie⁷⁶

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⁷⁶ Cf. J. Koder, "Aspekte der Thalassokratia der Byzantiner in der Ägäis", dans *Griechenland und das Meer*, p. 109.

THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF SEVENTH-CENTURY MUSLIM RAIDS INTO ANATOLIA WITH THE STRUGGLE FOR NORTH AFRICA¹

The termination of Mu'āwīya's truce with Emperor Constans II in 662 CE, after the end of the first Muslim civil war, probably created the opportunity for Mu'āwīya's² undertaking a more active offense against Byzantine Anatolia.³ Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-Tabaqāt*, dates the first Muslim wintering (camping over the winter, while also raiding) in Anatolia or Asia Minor to AH 42, 662/3 CE.⁴ This first Muslim

¹ This is a revised version of the paper with identical title that I delivered in the "Table Ronde: Échanges et conflits entre l'Occident chrétien et le monde musulman: l'Occident chrétien, Relations politiques, militaires, économiques, intellectuelles," XXth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Paris, France, 21 August 2001. Research for this paper benefited from a 1996-7 Fellowship from the Social Science Research Council, Mid-Career Faculty Research Program, and from several University of Chicago Social Science Divisional Research Grants.

² On Mu'āwīya: P. Crone and M. Hinds, *God's Caliph* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Khaled Mohammed Galal Mohammed Ali Keshk, "The Depiction of Mu'āwīya in the Early Islamic Sources" (Ph.D. diss., Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago 2002), David B. Cook, "The Beginnings of Islam in Syria During the Umayyad Period" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2002); Mirzap Polat, *Die Umwandlungsprozess von Kalifat zur Dynastie. Regierungspolitik und Religion beim ersten Umayyadenherrscher Mu'awīya ibn Abi Sufyan* (Frankfurt, Bern: P. Lang, 1999).

³ On Anatolia, Stelios Lampakes, ed., *He Vyzantine Mikra Asia 6.-12. ai.* (6th International Symposium, Ethnike Hidryma Ereunon, Instituton ton Vyzantinon Ereunon, Athens, 1998). Vasilike N. Vlysidou, *He Mikra Asia ton thematon: ereunes pano sten geographike physiognomia kai prospographia ton vyzantinon thematon tes Mikras Asias 7os.-11os. Ai.* (Ethnike Hidryma Ereunon, Instituton ton Vyzantinon Ereunon, Athens, 1998); Kostas G. Tsiknakis, ed. *To empolemo Vyzantio, 9.-12. ai.* (4th International Symposium, Ethnike Hidryma Ereunon, Instituton ton Vyzantinon Ereunon, Athens, 1997).

⁴ Muḥammad Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-Tabaqāt al Kabīr*, ed. Eduard Sachau, (Leiden: Brill, 1905) 5: 166= newer Arabic printing under title *Kitāb al-Tabaqāt al kubra* (Beirut) 5: 224. Ibn 'Asākir, 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan. *Ta'rikh Madīnat Dimashq*, ed.

wintering significantly coincides with departure of Emperor Constans II from Constantinople for Italy, where he arrived in spring 663 (arrival at Rome, 5 July 663).⁵ His absence tempted exponentially bolder Muslim raids, namely winter ones, in Asia Minor, with devastating consequences for the inhabitants. 662/3 was a watershed in the intensification of Muslim military pressures on many fronts against the Byzantines, now that the Muslim civil war had terminated, thereby releasing human and material resources for employment against Byzantium.⁶ The fortunes of Asia Minor, Africa, Sicily and Sardinia had become tightly interrelated, in part through the raiding in 665/6 CE (45 AH) by the Muslim commander Mu'āwiya Ibn Ḥudayj, who made a major raid against Byzantine Africa with 10,000 men in the southern part of what is now Tunisia.⁷ Hitherto unidentified references in the Pseudo-Methodius *Apocalypse* of the late seventh century reveal Muslim naval raids against Gighthis in Byzantine North Africa in the late 660s and against the port of Olbia in northeast Byzantine Sardinia probably shortly thereafter.

'Umar Gharāma 'Amrawī (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995-8) 37: 114. Muḥammad ibn 'Alī 'Azīmī. *Ta'rikh Ḥalab*, ed. Ibrāhīm Za'rūr (Damascus 1984) 177. Walter E Kaegi, "The Earliest Muslim Penetrations of Anatolia," in: *Byzantine State and Society in Memory of Nikos Oikonomides*, ed. A. Avramea, A. Laiou, E. Chrysos (Athens: National Hellenic Foundation, Center for Byzantine Studies, 2003) 269-282.

⁵ "Konstans II.", # 3691 *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*, Abt. I, Bd. 2 (2000) 480-484. Walter Kaegi, "The Riddle of Constans II in Italy," forthcoming. Andrew J. Ekonomou, has written a chapter (5) "The Italian Expedition of Constans II and the Impact of the East on Rome and the Papacy from 649 to 678," in his dissertation, "Byzantium on the Palatine: Eastern Influences on Rome and the Papacy, 590-752 A.D." (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 2000), pp. 266-332.

⁶ Alexander D. Beihammer, *Nachrichten zum byzantinischen Urkundenwesen in arabischen Quellen* (Bonn: Habelt, 2000) 313-14; also Andreas Kaplony, *Konstantinopel und Damaskus. Gesandtschaften und Verträge zwischen Kaisern und Kalifen 639-750* (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, 208; Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1996) 48-49. Beihammer's analysis seems the most plausible.

⁷ Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale, 1922) 193-194. Ibn 'Idhārī, *Bayān al-mughrib*, ed. G. S. Colin, E. Lévi-Provençal (3rd printing, Dār al-'Arabiya al-Kitāb, 1983) I 16-17.

Sardinia suffered raiding several decades earlier in the seventh century than hitherto assumed.

The Muslims did not wish the Byzantines in Constantinople to draw on the revenues of Africa or Sardinia or Sicily to finance their resistance to Islam in the east, that is, in Asia Minor, or to use it to finance or serve as a base for their expensive fleet/s that might well raid Muslim-controlled Egypt or other coastal areas. Muslim strategy strove to deny harbors and bases to the Byzantines. Forcing the Byzantines to spend, to pay tribute, or even just to defend Africa and other western possessions deprived them of funds that would otherwise be used to finance opposition to Islam in Anatolia, or even finance raids into northern Syria or against upper Mesopotamia or Armenia. Seizing or neutralizing the wealth of Byzantine Africa and islands such as Sardinia and Sicily served the Muslims in several ways. Important events and developments in many parts of the Mediterranean became interrelated by the 660s.

Muslim literary sources, most of which are recorded and compiled much later, offer no coherent detailed picture⁸ of the termination of Byzantine control of North Africa and of the precise relationship of that process to the situation in Byzantine Anatolia or other Byzantine-controlled territories in the west.⁹ Muslim sources seldom

⁸ Albrecht Noth, in collaboration with Lawrence I. Conrad. Trans. by Michael Bonner. *The Early Islamic Historical Tradition: a Source-Critical Study*. [Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 4] (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994); additional cautionary remarks: L. I. Conrad, "Heraclius in Early Islamic Kerygma," in G. Reinink and B. Stolte, eds., *The Reign of Heraclius. Crisis and Confrontation* (Leiden: Brill, 2002) 113-156; Conrad, s.v. "Futūḥ," in Julie Scott Meisami, Paul Starkey, eds., *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* (New York, London: Routledge, 1998) 237-40.

⁹ Fred Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing*. [Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 14] (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1998), for some historiographical problems. Also, Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests* (Cambridge 1995); Kaegi, "Society and Institutions in

identify Byzantine commanders or those commanders' offices or the institutions and practices, whether political, military or fiscal or ecclesiastical, in areas under Byzantine control in the west.¹⁰ Literary sources are skimpier about events and conditions in the west, namely, North Africa, Sardinia, the Balearics, and Sicily, than for those in the Levant or Mesopotamia.¹¹ No seventh-century Polybius whether Muslim or Christian has left a contemporary synthetic historical interpretation and narrative of events. It is modern historians who must attempt to sift and synthesize the disparate scraps of evidence.

The Byzantines strove to hold on to Africa, Sicily, and Sardinia, which they valued. The Heraclian dynasty engaged its prestige in the issue of Africa.¹² The Byzantines would have attempted to resist the Muslims in Africa in any case, but probably the Heraclian dynastic associations with Africa reinforced their determination. Byzantine Africa had been spared the ravages that Sasanian Persian invasion and occupation inflicted on the Levant and Egypt. Byzantine Africa did not contribute significantly to the defense of the Byzantine

Byzantine Africa," In: *Ai confini dell'impero. Storia, arte e archeologia della Sardegna bizantina*. (Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy: M & T Sardegna, 2002) pp. 15-28.

¹⁰ Of course there are problems understanding the administrative and military situation that existed in the Levant on the eve of the Early Islamic conquests. Although it contains many typographical and other errors, and many personal speculations of mixed value, there is some useful information in the probe of the situation by Oliver Schmitt, "Untersuchungen zur Organisation und zur militärischen Stärke oströmischer Herrschaft im vorderen Orient zwischen 628 und 633," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 94 (2001) 197-229. But his essay requires reading and sifting with critical caution.

¹¹ For some recent perspectives, Vallejo Girves, Margarita. *Bizancio y la España Tardoantigua (SS. V-VIII): Un Capítulo de Historia Mediterránea* (Memorias del Seminario de Historia Antigua, 4; Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 1993). Vassilios Christides, *Byzantine Libya and the March of the Arabs towards the West of North Africa* (BAR International Series 851 [Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 2000]).

¹² Walter E. Kaegi, *Heraclius Emperor of Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 19-57.

Levant and Egypt in the 630s or in the initial years of the 640s. But it could not remain aloof for long. It may be significant that the final part of Africa, Carthage, fell, when a member of the Heraclian dynasty, Justinian II, had just been deposed (he was deposed in 695, it fell in 698).

The Pseudo-Methodius *Apocalypse* from the early 690s provides a fearful but, non-historical vision of scattered events and diverse regions of Near East and Mediterranean worlds in the late seventh century. Although most of its contents refer to conditions in Upper Mesopotamia and the Levant, it identifies some places in the west that were afflicted by the Muslims, in particular, in the central Mediterranean. However incoherently and unsatisfactorily, its author sought to fit events into a pattern. We now can identify two hitherto unknown localities: one is the African port of Gighthis and the other is the northeastern Sardinian port of Olbia.¹³ The most important passage reads, referring to the Muslims (sons of Ishmael) "When the sons of Ishmael have seized power over every land and wasted cities and their districts and gained dominion in all islands, then they will build ships for themselves in the manner of birds and will fly over the waves of the sea. Then they will go up even to lands of the west as far as Rome the great and Illyricum and Gighthis and Thessalonica

¹³ *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius. Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen*, Ed., comment. by W. J. Aerts and G. A. A. Kortekaas 5 (4) *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, Vol. 569, Subsidia Tomus 97 (Leuven 1998) Greek: I 94, 98, Latin I 95, 99. Commentary Vol. 570, Subsidia Tomus 98 (Leuven 1998) "unverständlich" II 12, Latin "Die Ortsname bleibt rätselhaft" II 74. Cf. Ernst Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1898) 67 n. 2. See W. Kaegi, "Gighthis and Olbia in the Pseudo-Methodius Apocalypse and Their Significance," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 26 (2000) 161-7; Kaegi, "Byzantine Sardinia and Africa Face the Muslims: Seventh-Century Evidence," *Byzantinistica* 3 (2001) 1-25. Conversations with G. Reinink and with Dr. Barbara Roggema at the 6-8 June 2003 conference at the University of Erfurt, Germany on "The Encounter of Oriental Christianity with Early Islam" enriched my understanding of these two references. I am grateful for their information.

and Olbia the great, which is beyond Rome."¹⁴ Reference to this Muslim naval raid on Olbia, Sardinia shortly before the completion of the Pseudo-Methodius *Apocalypse* in 692 moves the earliest known Muslim incursion against Sardinia at least twenty years earlier than previously assumed. It undermines chronologies about Muslim-Byzantine-Lombard relations that assumed the first Muslim raids on Sardinia occurred after 711 and that they related to and had their origin in Muslim-controlled Spain.¹⁵

A cluster of actions concentrated in the late 660s in the vicinity of the island of Jerba and the adjacent mainland littoral. These were fateful for the future of North Africa and many islands in the central Mediterranean. The Pseudo-Methodius allusion to some naval attack on Gigthis probably refers to one of the earliest major Muslim raids along what is today the southern Tunisian coast. In 647-8 CE occurred the initial Muslim raid into Ifriqiyya (Africa) from Tripolitania and Cyrenaica by the Muslim commander 'Abd Allāh b. Sa'd b. Abī Sarḥ, which resulted in death of the exarch and imperial usurper Gregory, at Sufetula (Sbeitla), and the imposition of a huge payment of money on the inhabitants of Byzantine Africa.¹⁶ An alternative and slightly more likely date is 665/6 CE or 666/7, for in

¹⁴ *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius. Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen.* Ed., comment. by W. J. Aerts and G. A. A. Kortekaas II 12.

¹⁵ Such as the now erroneous chronological arguments of Santo Mazzarino, "Su una iscrizione di Turris Libisonis," *Epigraphica* 2 (1940) 292-313; followed by Lellia Cracco Ruggini to reject theories of G. Bognetti about purported Muslim-Lombard collaboration, Ruggini, "Costante II, l'anti-Costantino," *Scritti sul mondo antico in memoria di Fulvio grosso*, ed. Lidio Gasperini (Rome: Bretschneider, 1981) n. 15, pp. 550-551. However a redating of the Sardinian inscription in question for other reasons removes the inscription as a source for Byzantine-Muslim hostilities in the reign of Constans II. Fundamental on dating that puzzling inscription is Francesca Fiori, *Costantino Hypatos e doux di Sardegna* [*Quaderni della Revista di Bizantinistica*, 16] (Bologna: Editrice lo Scarabeo 2001) 52-54.

¹⁶ Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. C. Torrey ed. C. Torrey (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1922) 183-184. I am preparing a study of the Muslim conquest of Byzantine North Africa.

that year Mu'āwiya Ibn Ḥudayj made a major raid reportedly with 10,000 men in the south of modern Tunisia; he raided the ancient Roman Tacape (or modern Gabes) region, which lies a short distance north of Gigthis, encamped at Qammūniya, near the site of later Qayrawān, and ultimately captured Hippo Diarrhytus (Bizerte).¹⁷ At his direction 'Abd Allāh b. Zubayr captured Hadrumetum (modern Sousse) on the coast, 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān captured the strategic city of Jallūlā (Cuculis), controlling access to key passes in the dorsal mountains. Raiders returned to Egypt. 'Uqba b. Nāfir 'al-Fihri took more desert posts.¹⁸ There may have been a naval component of these raids. According to one Muslim tradition, the forces of Mu'āwiya Ibn Hudayj or other forces a year or two later in A.H. 46 or 47 captured the island of Jerba (Jirba), across from which on the mainland lies the port of Gigthis. The raid mentioned by Pseudo-Methodius against Gigthis may have coincided with that of Ruwayfi' b. Thābit and Fadhala b. 'Ubayd against Jerba in either 47 (667/8) or A.H. 49 (669/70).¹⁹ They apparently departed from Tripoli, which was a

¹⁷ Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale, 1922), p. 193.

¹⁸ Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale, 1922) 193-194. Ibn 'Idhārī, *Bayān al-mughrib*, ed. G. S. Colin, E. Lévi-Provençal (3rd printing, Dār al-'Arabiya al-Kitāb, 1983) I 16-17.

¹⁹ Mālikī, *Riṣāḍ al-Nufūs*, ed. H. Munis (Cairo) I 53; Bakrī (De Slane, Algiers 1857, repr. Baghdad, al-Muthanna) p. 19; al-Dabbāgh, 'Abdulrahmān, Ibn Nājī, *Ma'ālim al-Imān fī ma'rifat ahl al-Qayrawān* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1968) I: 122-123.) From Tripoli: Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ al-'Uṣfurī, *Ta'rīkh*, ed. Akram Diya al-Umari (Baghdad 1967), A.H. 47 (AD 667/8), I 193. He is an early transmitter (d. late eighth century). Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*. Ed. 'Umar Gharama 'Amrawī (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995-) vol. 48, p.296. Al-Bakrī, Abū 'Ubayd 'Abd Allah al-'Azz, *al-Mughrib fī dhikr bilād Ifrīqiyyah wa-al-Maghrib*, ed. De Slane (Algiers, 1857, repr. Baghdad, Muthanna, n.d. 1964?) 19; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Al-Istī'āb fī Ma'rifat al-Ashāb*, ed. Abū 'Umar Yūsuf (Cairo 1960) II 405, Mu'āwiya sent Ruwayfi' to Tripoli in AH 46 and he raided Ifriqiyyah from Tripoli in AH 47 and returned. Abdulwahid Dhanun Taha, *The Muslim Conquest and Settlement of North Africa and Spain* [Routledge, 1989] 59-60.

Mukhtar Abugaila Ageil, "Naval Policy and the Rise of the Fleet of Ifriqiyyah from the 1st to the 3d Centuries (7th to 9th Centuries A.D.)" (Ph.D. diss, University of Michigan, 1985), 83-84, n. 113, p. 123. Tabari 2.86=*History of al-Tabarī*, XVIII,

logical forward base for Muslim raids and expeditionary conquest in North Africa. The once thriving but poorly documented port of Gigthis is unlikely to have escaped these Muslim expeditions of 665/6, 667 or 670.

The savage surprise raids on Gigthis and Jerba may have intensified Byzantine internal strife: they probably stimulated resentments against Constans II and contributed to the envenomed environment in which his assassination took place in Syracuse, Sicily, in 668. The striking raids signified that despite lengthy and strenuous and expensive efforts, Constans II had been ineffective, that he had not devised a successful way to halt or reverse the Muslim expansion westward in the Mediterranean. After his assassination the fate of Byzantine North Africa was pretty much sealed, that is, by the beginning of the 670s, even though much Byzantine territory still remained outside of Muslim control at that time. There was little hope for additional significant military or financial assistance from the east or from Western Europe. The sole possible remaining option for locals was somehow improving and maximizing indigenous North African Roman and Berber armed resistance.

Imposition of a huge Muslim tribute on Africa in 647/8 after the Muslim victory at Sufetula allegedly became the pretext for the hard-pressed Byzantine Emperor Constans II to react by sending his own commander to demand his own (i.e., Byzantine imperial) taxes from his subjects in that territory.²⁰

The Caliphate of Mu'āwiyah, trans. by M. G. Morony (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987) 94, who does not identify Jerba. Old is E. W. Brooks, "The Arabs in Asia Minor from Arabic Sources," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 18 (1898) 185. Maurice Caudel, *Les premières invasions arabes dans l'Afrique du Nord (21-78 H.—641-697 J.-C.)* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1900) 91-2.

²⁰ Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale, 1922) 193-194, Ibn 'Idhārī, *Bayān al-mughrib*, ed. G. S. Colin, E. Lévi-Provençal (3rd printing, Dār al-'Arabiya al-Kitāb, 1983) I 16-17. On diplomatic relations between Constans II and Islam, but primarily in the eastern Mediterranean: Alexander

How the author of the Pseudo-Methodius gained his information about Gigthis we cannot determine, but he had heard something about major trading ports of the central and western Mediterranean. Identification of these previously baffling place-names of Gigthis in Africa and Olbia in northeastern Sardinia leaves many questions unanswered. The author is referring to distant but impressive-sounding cities and places (such as Olbia the great) lying at (in the case of Gigthis) or (in the case of Rome) near the sea. It is instructive to see just how far his geographical knowledge stretches. He wished to underscore how far the Muslims penetrated and ravaged in every direction, including Africa and Sardinia in the west by invoking far-away and famous places.

Syrian ("Oriental") traders may have passed on information about the seventh-century Muslim naval raids to other Syriac-speaking Christians even in seemingly remote areas of the Jabal Sinjar in western Iraq, or from others who learned of captives from the raiding or from direct (or more probably indirect) accounts of participants in the raids. The interrelatedness of the Mediterranean world and the interrelatedness of ports in Sardinia and Africa with events in western Asia are clear. However it is not so easy to document the ties or even tacit coordination between military activities of Muslims and Western European Christian powers such as the Lombards that some scholars have hypothesized.²¹ Such speculations deserve skepticism unless more documentation is forthcoming. But even without tacit coordination, the interrelatedness of the Mediterranean was a

Daniel Beihammer, *Nachrichten zum byzantinischen Urkundenwesen in arabischen Quellen* (565-811) (Poikila Byzantina, 17; Bonn: R. Habelt, 2000) 259-323.

²¹ Most notably, G. P. Bognetti, "S. Maria Foris Portas di Castelseprio e la storia religiosa dei Longobardi," but also "La rinascita cattolica dell'Occidente di fronte all'arianesimo e allo scisma," "Navi e navigazione nel diritto altomedievale," in his *L'età longobarda* (Milan 1966-8), respectively, 2: 340-1, 4: 288-89, 714-5, for bold speculations about tacit or open ties between Lombards and Muslim Arabs with particular regard to their respective relations with Byzantium.

maturing seventh-century phenomenon. However the elucidation of the hitherto puzzling reference to Olbia, Sardinia in the Pseudo-Methodius *Apocalypse* alters interpretations of the interrelationship of Muslims, Byzantines, and Lombards in the late seventh century.²²

The middle and late seventh century were part of a period in which various apocalyptic beliefs actually coincided with and may well have unintentionally assisted the Muslims conquests, by terrifying Christians and leading some of them to assume that contemporary events represented a visible sign of God's will, which they should not oppose, but should accept.²³

The Muslims who sought to conquer Byzantine North Africa had several motives: they sought to gain booty and treasure and fame from raiding Byzantine-controlled Sardinia and they wished to distract the Byzantines from defending their embattled positions in North Africa and in Asia Minor by raiding Sardinia.²⁴ But most of the

²² Walter Kaegi, "Byzantine Sardinia Threatened: Its Changing Situation in the Seventh Century," Oristano, Sardinia, Italy. To be published in *Convegno sui Bizantini in Sardegna: Forme e caratteri della presenza bizantina nel Mediterraneo occidentale: la Sardegna (secoli VI-XI)*, ed. by Paola Corrias, (22 March 2003), in press. Identification of Olbia in the Pseudo-Methodius *Apocalypse* undermines for example the logic of older arguments of Santo Mazzarino, "Su una iscrizione di Turris Libisonis," *Epigraphica* 2 (1940) 292-313; followed by Lellia Cracco Ruggini, "Costante II, l'anti-Costantino," *Scritti sul mondo antico in memoria di Fulvio grosso*, ed. Lidio Gasperini (Rome: Bretschneider, 1981) n. 15, pp. 550-551.

²³ Among these scholars are my colleague Fred M. Donner, University of Chicago, who works on the origins of Islam, and Dr. Tim Greenwood, University of Oxford, who is studying the apocalyptic mood in which the history attributed to Sebeos See Greenwood, "Sasanian Echoes and Apocalyptic Expectations: a Re-Evaluation of the Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos," *Le Muséon* 115, fasc. 3-4 (2002) 323-397. David Cook investigates apocalyptic expectations in early Islam (note 2, supra). See likewise V. Déroche, G. Dagron, "Juifs et chrétiens dans l'orient du VII^e siècle," *Travaux et Mémoires* 11 (1991) (*Doctrina Jacobi*, V, 1-2, 7-10, 16 pp 182-4, 194-9; 208-11; III, 8-12; pp 167-73).

²⁴ Salvatore Cosentino, "Gaudiosus 'Draconarius'. La Sardegna Bizantina attraverso un epitafio del secolo VI," *Quaderni della Revista di Bizantinistica*, 13

evidence for Sardinia as a seventh-century naval base refers to Cagliari, and none to Olbia. In the late seventh century the Muslims attempted to press the Byzantines on all possible fronts, so they could not concentrate their limited resources and forces on a single front. By raiding Sardinia the Muslims compelled the Byzantines to scatter their naval and military forces in different directions to try to cope with a range of potential Muslim strikes. The Muslim base probably was Tripoli, although possibly one in Cyrenaica or even Alexandria, Egypt.

Historians need to look more at the Egyptian situation immediately following Egypt's conquest by Muslims. That is the matrix from which emerged the conquerors of North Africa. To the greatest extent possible, we need to understand the new Muslim elites and the troops, their motivations, perceptions and alignments and networking.

The *Apocalypse* seems to envision a world not much different from what is reported in an Arabic list of Byzantine-controlled localities in the late seventh century.²⁵ The Muslim raid against Olbia occurred within several decades after the Muslim raid on Sicily in 652. It involved no occupation or settlement by Muslims at that time. There is, in contrast to Cyprus,²⁶ no report of any treaty or imposition of any tribute in money or in kind on inhabitants of Olbia or other parts of Sardinia. We have no other details.

(Bologna: Editrice la Scarabeo, 1994). Also, N. Oikonomides, "Une liste arabe des stratèges byzantins du VII^e siècle et les origines du Thème de Sicile," *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici*, n.s. 1 (1964) 121-30, for important discussion of the role of Sardinia as a Byzantine naval base.

²⁵ N. Oikonomides, "Une liste arabe des stratèges byzantins du VII^e siècle et les origines du Thème de Sicile," *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici*, n.s. 1 (1964) 121-30.

²⁶ D. Feissel, "Inscriptions chrétiennes et Byzantines. 552. Soloi," *Revue des Etudes Grecques* 100 (1987) 380-381.

Byzantine troops from Africa participated in the suppression of the revolt of the Byzantine commander Mezezios in Sicily after the assassination of Constans II in 668.²⁷ It was, however, an ill-timed distraction from the task of defending Africa against the Muslims. Here again local dissension facilitated the penetration by the Muslims. It happened several times in Africa, and it would happen in the future in Sicily. A successful and devastating Arab raid on Sicily occurred immediately thereafter, which suggests that Muslims were informed of, were watching and were trying to coordinate their activities with internal Byzantine developments, including in Sicily. The participation of Byzantine troops from Africa in the suppression of Mezezios' revolt indicates that some reliable mobile troops were present in Africa, not merely passive defensive garrisons. However they were not the only participants in the suppression of that revolt, for other units came from the Balkans and Italy.

Byzantine control in Africa, Sicily, and Sardinia enjoyed two external respites that had nothing to do with Byzantine efforts: the first and second Arab civil wars, the first after the murder of the Caliph 'Uthmān in 656, which lasted until 661, and the second, the struggle of the Marwanids against 'Abdullāh b. Zubayr, which lasted from 780 until 692.²⁸ Muslims resumed and even intensified their major aggressive military activity at the end of each of those civil wars. The synchronization of major Muslim advances with the termination of those civil wars is significant. When those internal wars raged at full intensity, local Muslim commanders in the west could not realistically expect much military assistance in the form of troops, supplies, horses, and funds from Damascus. So both sides,

²⁷ W.E. Kaegi, *Byzantine Military Unrest* (Amsterdam, Las Palmas: Hakkert, 1981) 165-166, 182-183. But cf. T. C. Lounghis, "A Deo conservandum imperiale obsequium. Some Notes Concerning Byzantine Field Troops," *Byzantinoslavica* 52 (1991) 55. Pasquale Corsi, *La spedizione italiana di Costante II* (Bologna: Pàtron, 1983) 186-206.

²⁸ Overview: Kaegi, "Some Reconsiderations Concerning the Themes," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 16 (1967) 39-53.

Byzantine and Muslim, confronted their own internal problems that affected the military, political, economic, and fiscal situations in Africa and Sardinia.

The Byzantine government was exploiting Africa, and to much more modest extent, Italy and Sardinia, for funds to use for the defense of Anatolia, among other purposes, and that was part of the grievance of Africans, Sardinians and Sicilians, which partially explained their landowners' restiveness at the time of the Muslim conquests.²⁹ This point is relevant to the history of Byzantine Anatolia in the seventh century. The interrelationship of the two fronts and their respective fortunes are becoming somewhat clearer.

The historian has a little better information about the conquest of Syria and Egypt than that of Africa. Byzantine resistance in Africa was longer lived than in Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, or Egypt. Africa was prosperous and unlike Anatolia, had not suffered from Persian invasions at the beginning of the seventh century. It was further from the center of Muslim power and further from the center of Byzantine power as well. Growing archaeological evidence stresses its continuing prosperity and not the image of decline of Byzantine Africa that the Byzantinist Charles Diehl and others had argued at the end of the last century or the beginning of this one. Yet Africa's resistance failed. The experiences of Sardinia were more complex.

There is no simple answer to the question whether military experience from either front, Africa or Asia Minor, affected Muslim or

²⁹ On Byzantine fiscal institutions in the seventh century, see Wolfram Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung in Krisenzeiten. Untersuchungen zur byzantinischen Verwaltungsgeschichte zwischen dem ausgehenden 6. und den beginnenden 9. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt 2002) especially pp. 235-38, 307-8, 323-30, 420-26, 475-79, 507-9.

Byzantine performance and policy in the other.³⁰ Yet there were *cleisurae* (that term having long been in use in Africa) on both fronts. In both regions there were fortresses and towers that served as points of refuge from raids. If anything, one might have expected North Africa, already experienced in handling Berber raiders, to be better experienced than Anatolia. But that did not prove to be the case. Rotation of commanders who gained experience on one front to serve and bring their experience with them to the other front did occur in a few cases, such as the Muslim commander Fadhala b. 'Ubayd, who fought in both the Muslim raid and occupation of Jerba in North Africa as well as in expeditions to Anatolia, and Buṣr b. Abī Arṭāt, who participated in the early raids into eastern Anatolia as well as early raids into the interior of Libya at the beginning of the 640s and again with 'Uqba b. Nāfir al-Fihri in 669, and no less than 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, who participated in the raid against Jallulā (Cuculis) in 665 at the behest of Mu'āwiya Ibn Ḥudayj. Some useful military experience was surely transmitted from one front to the other. But there is no evidence for any certain winning military formulae being transferred.

Byzantine Africa was drained in part to help Byzantine Anatolia. Some of the questionable phrasing in Leontios of Neapolis' *Life of John the Almsgiver* was probably crafted by its author ca. 641 CE to invoke precedents from John's ritual brother, Niketas, cousin of Heraclius, and father of Empress and Empress-Mother Gregoria, to appeal for a halt to squeezing churches for plate and other wealth to meet the needs of the state, including for the urgent defense of Anatolia.³¹ This is consistent with information in the *Liber*

³⁰ Important analysis of Byzantine army: John Haldon, *Warfare, State, and Society in the Byzantine World, 565-1204* (London: UCL Press, 1999).

³¹ Leontios of Neapolis, *Vie de Jean de Chypre*, ed. trans. A. Festugière (Paris 1974) 356-7, 456-7; Kaegi, *Heraclius* 310-11; Kaegi, "Egypt on the Eve of the Muslim Conquest," *Cambridge History of Egypt* ed. C. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998) I 56-58.

Pontificalis concerning conditions and pressures to seize plate a quarter-century later in Africa.

The Muslims established no Qayrawān (Africa, Tunisia) or other permanent base of their own in Anatolia, in contrast to what they did in Africa. Significantly, Muslim wintering in Anatolia is virtually contemporary with, anticipating only by a few years, the establishment of a Muslim camp at Qayrawān in 670 CE. That may signal a new kind of strategy and procedure. But there will be no Anatolian Qayrawān. Nor did Arabs seize long-term any particular strategic fortress or city north of the Taurus Mountains.

Defenders of Byzantine positions were on their own, but only insofar as they coordinated their defenses within limits informally approved or accepted by the central government.³²

Any efforts³³ to redate the PAX ("Peace") coinage of the Byzantine Carthage mint from 646/647 CE to 651/652 to celebrate Byzantine peace with Caliph Mu'āwīya in Syria are unpersuasive, in part because our understanding of other events no longer provides a smooth chronological fit.³⁴ That gold coinage inscription PAX refers to the situation in Africa, and probably only to restoration of peace between the Roman/Christian inhabitants of Africa and the Byzantine

³² Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests*, 236-285. Broader institutional issues: J. Haldon, "Seventh-Century Continuities", in Av. Cameron ed., *States, Resources, and Armies* (Princeton: Darwin 1995) 379-423.

³³ W. Hahn, *Moneta Imperii Byzantini* (Denkschriften, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Kl., 148 [1981] 3: 134, no. 157a and 157b, silver. Grierson, *DO Cat* 2. 2: 475, 476, nos. 312.1, 132.2, 132.3, 133, and esp. Grierson's comment in footnote on p. 475 "The obvious occasion was the defeat of the rebel Gregorius in 647 and the conclusion of peace with the Arab government in Egypt."

³⁴ L. I. Conrad, "The Conquest of Arwad: A Source-Critical Study in the Historiography of the Early Medieval Near East," *Problems in the Literary Source Material, The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*, 1, ed. by Av. Cameron and L. I. Conrad (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1992) 317-401; Conrad, "The Arabs and the Colossus," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd. ser., vol. 6 (1996) 165-187.

(Roman) government at Constantinople, not to any temporary peace in Africa with Muslims, after the failure of the rebellion of Gregory the Exarch in 646/7. It does not refer to any Byzantine peace with the Umayyad Caliph or his deputies.

Peace agreements made in Syria did not necessarily apply (and by "apply" I mean legally, or formally in a normal diplomatic sense) to Muslim-Byzantine relations elsewhere, in particular, in Africa. The Byzantinist Andreas Stratos wonders why the peace with Mu'āwiya made with the Byzantines in ca. 678-679 concerning the Mardaites was not observed in Africa, where 'Uqba b. Nāfī' al-Fihri undertook his great raid of 682/3. It occurred in spite of this truce.³⁵ The historian Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ al-'Uṣfurī, *Ta'rīkh*, whose work Stratos did not know, because it was not translated, dates a peace to AH 41, that is, to 661/2 CE, which is a reasonable dating.³⁶ Stratos is trying to make the truce last three entire years, which it may not have done, whatever the initial intentions of parties to the agreement. It probably began in 661/2 CE.³⁷ The Muslim historian al-Ya'qūbī dates it to the beginning of 42 AH, [ca. May-June 662] 662/3 CE, and states that it was Caliph Mu'āwiya who first made a peace with the Byzantines, that after Mu'āwiya stabilized matters his commanders made annual raids into Byzantine territory. In an excellent study Dr. Alexander Beihammer has made very intelligent comments on the difficulties with understanding what really happened in 662.³⁸ But events were truly complicated and their explanation is not easy. Implicitly al-Ya'qūbī does not recognize any earlier treaty made by Mu'āwiya, such as the alleged peace made by Procopius. 'Uqba b. Nāfī' al-Fihri in Africa was probably not bound by it, and in any case chose to ignore it. Africa was simply too far from Syria in that era of slow and difficult communications to expect terms to apply to

³⁵ Stratos, *Byz* 4: 25, 51; cf. 4: 46-47.

³⁶ Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ al-'Uṣfurī, *Ta'rīkh*, 189.

³⁷ Stratos, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century* 3: 43 n. 160.

³⁸ Alexander Beihammer, *Nachrichten zum byzantinischen Urkundenwesen* 314.

all Byzantine-Muslim military fronts. Probably al-Ya'qūbī and his source meant that Mu'āwīya was the first caliph to initiate negotiations for peace with the Byzantines and to pay them for a truce, instead of vice-versa. Even the earlier plague of Amawas and other crises had not caused Muslims to seek a temporary negotiated peace arrangement. Sebeos does not refer to this peace.

Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-Tabaqāt*, dates the first Muslim wintering (camping over the winter, while also raiding) in Anatolia or Asia Minor to AH 42.³⁹ According to him, "And the Muslims wintered in the land of the Byzantines [*arḍ al-Rūm* =Anatolia] in the year 42 [662/63 CE] and this was the first winter quarters/winter camp [*mashtān*] they wintered in it." This first Muslim wintering in Anatolia significantly coincided with departure of Emperor Constans II from Constantinople for Italy. Constans arrived in Italy, at Taranto, in spring 663. His absence tempted more adventurous and devastating Muslim raids, namely winter-long ones, in Asia Minor.⁴⁰ Hence 662/3 marked the intensification of Muslim military pressures on many fronts against the Byzantines, now that the Muslim civil war had terminated. Now additional human and material resources became available for deployment against Byzantium. Simultaneously, the fortunes of Asia Minor, Africa, Sicily and Sardinia had become tightly interrelated.⁴¹

Muslims probably ventured on some destructive raid against Sardinia in the late seventh century, before, not after, their successful invasion

³⁹ Ibn Sa'd, *Biographien*= *Kitāb al-Tabaqāt*, (ed. E. Sachau [K.V. Zettersteen] Leiden: Brill 1905) vol. 5: 166. Also, in a later (twelfth-century history) Muhammad ibn 'Alī 'Azīmī. *Ta'rīkh Ḥalab*, (Damascus 1984) 177.

⁴⁰ On the probable rationale for Constans II's departure for Italy and Sicily as an effort to strengthen military defenses in the west: Corsi, *La spedizione italiana di Costante II* 85-96, 117-118.

⁴¹ Mukhtar Abugaila Ageil, "Naval Policy and the Rise of the Fleet of Ifriqiyyah from the First to the Third Centuries A.H. (7th to 9th Centuries A.D.)" (Ph.D. Diss. University of Michigan/Ann Arbor, 1985).

and occupation of much of Spain that started in 711 CE. They sought to apply military pressure everywhere, by land and sea, and occasionally switched to applying financial pressure by imposing heavy tribute.

Arrangements on the Syrian frontier did not apply to Muslim commanders in far-flung Africa, or on those raiding islands in the Mediterranean such as Sardinia, whether because of an explicit and conscious omission or because of an inability to control commanders and misunderstandings or local initiatives on those fronts so far from Constantinople and from Syria. Caliphs such as 'Umar I always had difficulties in controlling 'Amr b. al-'Aṣ, and so it should not be surprising that there were difficulties in controlling 'Uqba, who was a relative of 'Amr b. al-'Aṣ.⁴² The same considerations may even apply to the actions of Muslims in Armenia, that such treaties involved Mu'āwiya and forces in Syria, not those Muslims who were elsewhere. In other words, assuming there was a temporary peace arranged between envoys of Constans II and Mu'āwiya to apply to the Syrian and Mesopotamian front, there is no reason to assume that such a truce invariably also applied in Africa. Respite on one front did not mean respites on all fronts against the Muslims. So such truces did not free up all Byzantine troops for use in the Balkans, for example. But Caliph Mu'āwiya and his immediate caliphal successors in Damascus were probably not micro-managing the planning of naval raids against Sardinia. We simply do not know how late seventh-century Muslims conceived and directed their strategy and operations in the central and western Mediterranean.

The account in the *Liber Pontificalis* that Byzantines under Constans II were stripping churches in Africa -- as well as Italy and Sicily -- of

⁴² Albrecht Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study*, 2nd ed. rev. by L. I. Conrad, trans. by Michael Bonner (Princeton: Darwin 1994) 182-183.

wealth resembles actions that other Byzantines took in the eastern Mediterranean earlier in the century. *Liber Pontificalis* states:

[Constans II] *ingressus Sicilia per indictionem VII et habitavit in civitate Syracusans et tales afflictiones posuit populo seu habitatoribus vel possessoribus provinciarum Calabriae, Siciliae, Africae vel Sardiniae per diagrafa seu capita atque nauticatione per annos plurimos, quales a seculo numquam fuerant* [and imposed such afflictions on the people and inhabitants and landowners of the provinces of Calabria, Sicily, Africa and Sardinia by means of censuses and head taxes and navigation/maritime commercial taxes for many years, which had never occurred before], *ut etiam uxores a maritos vel filios a parentes separarent. Et alia multa inaudita perpassi sunt, ut alicui spes vitae non remaneret. Sed et vasa sacra vel cymilia sanctarum Dei abstollentes nihil demiserunt* [and many other unheard of things were suffered, so that there remained no hope of life. But they did not even stoop to avoid taking even the sacred vessels and treasures of the saints of God].

This statement is not fanciful. The Byzantines aimed to amass and spend the seized precious metals and coin to fight the enemies of the empire, whether Persians or Muslims, so that process of increasing the taxation of ecclesiastical and spiritual resources as well as lay resources, was continuing later in the century.⁴³ The Carolingian authority Hrabanus Maurus says Emperor Heraclius ordered the stripping of Zoroastrian temples in Persia of silver, gold, gems back in 627/628/629, in the short period of his occupation of some Sasanian Persian territory.⁴⁴ Contemporary Byzantine hagiography

⁴³ *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. L. Duchesne, 1: 344.

⁴⁴ Hrabanus Maurus, *PL* 110: 132-133.

offers other confirmation (*Life of John the Almsgiver* by Leontios of Neapolis) of imperial officials' efforts -- in this case in Alexandria, Egypt -- to seize church wealth to help defray imperial expenses. In fact Leontios of Neapolis' biography of John the Almsgiver provides evidence of a very real contemporary concern ca. 641 that the Byzantine officials were threatening to seize more church wealth. That is the probable explanation for the inclusion of examples showing the hazards of seizing such wealth in the recent past, and trying to show that late cousin Niketas of Emperor Heraclius (Niketas was the father of Heraclius Constantine's wife, Gregoria, who came from the Pentapolis) had first tried to appropriate such wealth, but had then desisted in his dealings with Patriarch John. This is an effort to persuade policymakers, using the precedents of the caution and respect shown by Niketas for Patriarch John, not to try to seize any more church wealth, especially in the form of plate and money.⁴⁵ The implication is that there was very real danger in the eyes of ecclesiastics in 641 CE in and around Constantinople. But Byzantine policymakers faced a shortage of funds and so had recourse to this unpopular policy.

Clerics shared a widespread fear that the Byzantine authorities would persist and even intensify seizures of ecclesiastical wealth. Hence Leontios of Neapolis (Cyprus) in the critical years 641-2 is so insistent on explaining why and how John the Almsgiver and his ritual brother Nicetas, first cousin of Heraclius himself, had clashed and how Nicetas had yielded and ceased attempting to seize ecclesiastical funds and plate.⁴⁶ That was very contemporary with comparable problems of the church in Africa (and Italy and elsewhere in the Byzantine Empire). So once again events and trends

⁴⁵ Leontios of Neapolis, *Vie de Jean de Chypre*, ed. trans. A. Festugière (Paris 1974) 356-7, 456-7; Kaegi, *Heraclius* 310-11; Kaegi, "Egypt on the Eve of the Muslim Conquest," *Cambridge History of Egypt* ed. C. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998) I 56-58.

⁴⁶ Vincent Déroche, *Études sur Léontios de Néapolis* (Uppsala 1995) 18, 25.

were becoming common to different ends of the Mediterranean. Grumbling and open clashes with Byzantine authorities poisoned the atmosphere in Byzantine-controlled territories in Italy, Africa and Sardinia in the seventh century, while the process of the Muslim conquests and raids was just beginning.

Various seventh-century texts, such as the *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati*, an anti-Jewish treatise that was probably composed around 634 CE, show how quickly terrifying news spread from one end of the Mediterranean to the other, and even beyond.⁴⁷

We historians need to develop a larger framework for looking at the broader contours of seventh-century experiences of Africa⁴⁸ and Sardinia and Sicily. The departure of Emperor Constans II from Constantinople for Italy in 662-3 was a turning-point. Diverse sources concur that there was intensifying Muslim pressures against the Byzantines on many fronts: Africa, Asia Minor by land, and Sicily and Sardinia by water.

North Africa did not and could not live in isolation from medical and economic trends, conditions, and developments elsewhere in the Mediterranean and in the empire, including the desperate need for more human and material resources such as precious metals, and threats such as the ravages of plague. Everywhere the empire's resources were stretched too thin.

Interrelationships of events are becoming a little more apparent. As our knowledge of the Islamic world improves, it becomes possible to understand more accurately the larger context (including the

⁴⁷ *Doctrina Jacobi* V, 16, V, 20, pp. 209-11, 215-219 in Gilbert Dagron, Vincent Déroche, "Juifs et chrétiens dans l'Orient du VII^e siècle," *Travaux et Mémoires* 11 (1991) and comments on pp 239-46.

⁴⁸ Broad perspectives in Peter Pentz, *From Roman Proconsularis to Islamic Ifriqiyah* Goteborg: Museet, GOTARC. Serie B., Gothenburgs Archacological Theses no. 22 (2002).

mentality of apocalypticism) for raids into Anatolia, even though there may be little improvement in our technical knowledge of the raids themselves.⁴⁹ Some of the best hopes for a better understanding of those invasions come in subsequent years, namely, the Abbasid period, especially through the work of Paul Cobb, on Abbasid Syria. He has reached important new conclusions (still unpublished), however, concerning the interrelationship of the revolt of Thomas the Slav with events within the Caliphate, especially with Abbasid Syria, as well as other materials on later references to the Mardaites (al-Jarājima). But the seventh century remains opaque in many places.

We do not know the process by which intelligence from Anatolia and from Muslim-dominated Armenia was passed on to and coordinated with Muslims in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia, or for that matter, how they integrated and processed any information from operations in Africa into those in Anatolia. Many questions remain. The solution of many of them may not be easy. But it is imperative to investigate interrelationships and the task will require communication with and synthesis of materials by many different specialists from diverse specialties. Among the important gaps is any explicit contemporary narrative in any language that voices consciousness of the inter-relatedness that had now developed between Muslims, Byzantines, and Lombards.

What we can say is that at times military events and religious and intellectual reactions were segmented and localized, but at others they became tightly interconnected. But given distances and realities of travel and communication and local differences and interests, there

⁴⁹ Michael Bonner, *Aristocratic Violence and Holy War, Studies in the Jihad and the Arab-Byzantine Frontier*, American Oriental Series, Vol. 81. (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1996). I have not seen M. Bonner, ed., *Arab-Byzantine Relations in Early Islamic Times* (Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington VT, forthcoming).

never developed a total fusion in the Mediterranean. Continuities and ties remained despite processes of change.

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**THE SANGARIOS FRONTIER:
THE HISTORY AND STRATEGIC ROLE OF
PAPHLAGONIA IN BYZANTINE DEFENCE IN THE 13th
CENTURY**

The following maps follow the text:

1. Map 1: Redrawn version of Ostrogorsky's map of the Nicaean Empire.
2. Map 2: The Imperial border 1190 (based on Ahrweiler)
3. Map 3: Paphlagonia in 1215
4. Map 4: The forts of eastern Paphlagonia
5. Map 5: The Empire of Trebizond in 1206
6. Map 6: The central area of the Paphlagonian Border

Text

This paper asks in what way Paphlagonia was an essential factor in the defence of 13th Century Byzantium, thus considering its geography and topography alongside the two questions, 'Where was the Imperial Frontier?' and, 'Was it stable? Further to this, the influence of geography on the history will be assessed. In particular the study tries to look at things from a different aspect by asking slightly different questions to those used previously.²

This main problem with studying 13th century Paphlagonia is that only two periods are well recorded, 1203 to 1214 and 1280 to 1282: otherwise there is a mere scattering of other information. This latter

¹ I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. D. Korobeinikov, Prof. A.A.M. Bryer and Dr. Ruth Macrides for their help, advice and the views that they have expressed.

² This refers to instances in Choniates and Mesarites of which only one for each is actually quoted below.

material is valuable but it always has to be kept in mind that there is no real way of evaluating the importance of such odds and ends. One particular author, Mesarites, provides us with important information of this type but one has to remember its context, that is that he put his historical comments into texts which have a main subject that is totally unrelated to the history in order to explain his own actions. Similarly the information from Choniates addresses need to be taken with a pinch of salt for they are eulogies that are intended to ingratiate him with the recipient, Theodore I Laskaris.

Finding the border was not helped by the widely differing views on the matter held by modern historians. Perhaps the most influential was Ostrogorsky's in his book a *History of the Byzantine State*. It included what became the most popular map of the Nicæan Empire (Map 1 is a redrawn extract), which some historians still used in the 1990s³ despite the fact that it shows more than 200 km of Byzantine penetration into the Anatolian interior, something that almost all Byzantinists since 1970 would agree was wrong.

Three exemplars will suffice to illustrate the problem with this map: the Second Crusade was defeated near the abandoned city of Dorylaeum in 1147⁴, in 1176 Manuel I was forced by the Sultan to dismantle his recently built fortifications there and, lastly⁵, Malagina, which was abandoned at the time and very close to Nicaea, was only regained from the Moslems in the 1144.⁶ Indeed abandonment is a typical sign of a place being close to a border and for other examples

³ Philip Grierson *Byzantine Coins* London 1982.

Jonathan Riley-Smith (ed.) *The Atlas of the Crusades* London 1991.

⁴ Kinnamos pp. 68-9.

⁵ Kinnamos, pp. 220-2 Choniates 99-100 & 107.

⁶ Choniates p. 31.

see the references to, Calamus in Akropolites⁷, Nikomedia in Villehardouin⁸ and Tralles in Pachymeres⁹.

Also even if one accepts Ostrogorsky's view that a wide military zone existed between the administrative borders of the two states, that is borders in the sense proposed by Ahrweiler,¹⁰ this map still could not be correct. Indeed it is difficult to see where Ostrogorsky's line came from,¹¹ as his book contains so many facts that contradict it. On the other hand Ahrweiler's work on the 12th Century Komnene fortresses constructed against the Selçuk invasions shows that they were defending a much smaller, rather straggly sector, of northwest Anatolia than Ostrogorsky suggests (Map 2 shows her work applied to the 13th century).¹²

So why is Ostrogorsky's map still used? This may be because it is only the eastern border of the empire of Nicaea is wrong. The complete map shows both European and Asiatic Byzantium in the 13th century and certainly its proposed (Asiatic) border of the Latin Empire seems reasonable for the period 1211-1223, as too do the European borders shown.¹³ Thus for most purposes not requiring consideration of the border with the Turks, it is usable.

The border line on Map 2 is the author's proposal for about 1185 but without the area around Attaleia despite that remaining in Byzantine hands until after 1204. The Author's line is only discussed north east

⁷ Akropolites, p. 30.

⁸ Villehardouin, p. 176.

⁹ Pachymeres, p. II. 593, 597.

¹⁰ Ahrweiler 1976 – this discussion is without doubt the best there is.

¹¹ Here I thank Prof. Kaegi for the information that he did not draw it personally but I support the view that the author must be held responsible for what is in his book.

¹² Ahrweiler 1960; particularly the map.

¹³ Allowing for the fact that it is a multi-functional map and that the author has not studied Europe in this respect.

of Adramyttium, all of which is both west and north of Ostrogorsky's proposal despite predating it. The forts that were lost before 1204 are not shown.

All the maps are representational and all borders are linear despite the many objections. The fact that border areas are often less certainly held than the interior does make the border any less real. Nor is the line negated because the people living either side of it co-operate with one another, as Pachymeres accuses them of doing in 1267.¹⁴ Indeed in 13th century Anatolia, it is likely that there was little difference between the villagers on either side of the line before the end of the century and whilst there may have been isolated mountain towns in Paphlagonia were dominated by neither side, which would enable one to refer to a border zone, few are prepared to pay taxes to two governments, so double domination is unlikely, anywhere. Thus linear borders are used.

Further, though the Araç Defence Line, see below (map 4), is used to define a border, it is not assumed that this is anything other than an indicator that the territory behind it belonged to Byzantium. Indeed as has recently been shown, Hadrian's Wall was probably never the Roman-Pictish border and that Roman rule may have spread as much as 80 km further north, thus the possibility of arrangements of this sort must be born in mind throughout this study.

However, the northern forts shown on Mme Ahrweiler's map (map 2) do define an area which compares closely with the literary reports of the day such as the one following by Choniates that Andronikos I, after retaking Prusa from rebels:

"... had Theodore Angelos... blinded, placed on an ass, and led away beyond the Roman border, and gave instructions

¹⁴ Pachymeres, vol. 2 pp 402-404.

that he be then released so that he should roam alone wherever the beast of burden should take him."¹⁵

Which tells us that in 1184, Prusa was near the border. Further, another passages tells us that Manuel I relieved Klaudiopolis in the winter of 1179.¹⁶ Amongst the Turkish local historians, Yazicioğlu believes that Safranbolu was lost in 1190¹⁷ and Fuat Yaşar intimates that Byzantium regained Araç in 1213¹⁸. These references all show Turks to the west of Ostrogorsky's line over a range of dates and places, sometimes fighting, sometimes not.

Now who were the Turks along the border and what did they do?

Langdon has shown from Papal records that there were Turks there in the 1220/30s¹⁹ and Choniates reports their presence in the 1180s.²⁰ So the towns almost certainly had mainly Greek populations with some Turks settled alongside them in the countryside. Indeed Ramsay²¹ thought that the area's population declined after the 6th century and Foss has proved this in the specific cases of Ankara,²² Nikomedia²³ and Sardis,²⁴ whilst Crow has done so for Amasra.²⁵ So there probably was plenty of space for a few nomads with no-where to go.

¹⁵ Choniates, p. 160.

¹⁶ *ibid* pp 111-112.

¹⁷ Yazicioğlu p. 13.

¹⁸ Yaşar 1990, pp. 23-24.

¹⁹ Langdon, *Offensive*, pp. 22-23.

²⁰ Choniates* pp. 253-4. This refers to direct military intervention or supply of rebels by the Emir of Ankara.

²¹ Ramsay, *Geography*, pp. 196ff.

²² Foss, Ankara, whole article and Foss, *Persians*, p.724-725.

²³ Foss, *Nicomedia*, pp. 188-189.

²⁴ Foss, *Persians*, pp. 736-738.

²⁵ Crow, *Amasra*, p. 255.

So what can be said about these nomads who settled alongside the Greeks?

Several things can be said about them with some certainty but mainly by analogy.²⁶

- They were definitely of Turkish origin²⁷ and those that settled in the area were probably semi-nomadic pastoralists that is Turkmen. In the 1960s, remnants of such still existed in the Bolu Dağı though the author saw no evidence of them in 1996.
- Since the population was well below the maximum possible there was almost certainly sufficient free land at different heights for them to establish the sort of migratory pattern that they used when living in central Asia: that is regular migration along predetermined routes between summer and winter pastures: i.e. transhumance.
- As autarky is almost impossible with this way of life, nomads need to earn money by secondary activities in order to buy those necessities that they need but cannot make. Sale of flocks is not usually an option as they provide for their most basic needs and are always at the risk of the hazards of malign fate: drought, disease and raiding.
- It is clear from elsewhere that different tribes earn this money in different ways: the most usual being, soldiering, as in Süleiman's army, guarding villages, as in 19th century Transjordania,²⁸ transport as the Yürök do in present day Turkey, or the production of industrial goods such as carpets as the Kerman do in Iran. Also all such 'tribes' raid from

²⁶ Regrettably there is not room to present the case in favour of the analogies in full in this article.

²⁷ As is obvious from the long term result.

²⁸ see next paragraph for details.

time to time but in general they have to get on with the villagers or eventually starve.

- It is probable that most of those in west Paphlagonia became village guards²⁹ because the villages would have had need of such force in the period between Alexios I's abandonment of it and Manuel I's reoccupation of the lands between the Bolu Dağları and the Sangarios in 1143, some sixty two years later.
- The formal description of such groups is semi-nomadic pastoralists with a military semi-specialism. Wittek thought them the remnants of Süleiman's army but there is no evidence that those who settled there were anything but immigrants whose guarding of the villages was little short of a protection racket. Gibbons view of them as disbanded conscript war bands is just possible.³⁰

The number of Turkmen in the area prior to 1243 was probably small, so they would have had to get on with the local population. Indeed the only mention of fighting along the eastern border between 1190 and 1280, is at Sinope in 1214 by Ibn Bibi, between 1211 and 1230 by Ibn Natif,³¹ and in 1267 by Pachymeres, with only the last not being by a formal army.

Klaus Belke's work³² indicates that there are two lines of forts in Paphlagonia, one north of Araç (probably including Araç), which is shaped like a corner defence,³³ and another south of Herakleia but there is no sign of the whole border being fortified but rather, as one

²⁹ There is no mention of Paphlagonia soldiers being Turks despite there being several mentions in Pachymeres of the Paphlagonians as being good soldiers.

³⁰ Gibbons, *Foundation 1968*, p. 13-17.

³¹ Cahen, *Kastamonu*, Beginning of the article. Specific years are given and the list is not continuous.

³² Belke: Map + various references.

³³ Booth 1998, map 3.

would expect, the defenders of Paphlagonia must have relied on its heavily wooded, precipitous mountains.

Pachymeres tells us that Herakleia, Amastris, Kytoros and Teion were Byzantine in 1267,³⁴ which is a similar to the list given in the Georgian Royal Chronicle (next paragraph) for 1204.³⁵ This suggests that things were mostly stable there during the 13th century. Thus both in 1204 and 1267 the border must have run through the mountains to the south of these ports. In fact only one ridge is suitable, the Bolu Dağları (map 3). The fortresses described by Belke³⁶ (and by Kara³⁷) defend the extremities of this ridge not the ridge itself.³⁸

The report in the Georgian Royal Annals³⁹ about the campaigns of the grandsons of the Emperor Andronikos I, David and Alexios,⁴⁰ reads as follows:

*"Courroucée contre l'empereur grec ... fit partir un détachement de soldats imers, que s'empara de la Lazique, de Trébizonde, de Limon, de Samison, de Sinope, de Cérassunte, de Cythora, d'Asmastris, d'Heraclee, de toute la Paphlagonie et du Pont, et les donna à son parent Alexis Comnene, fils d'Andronic, alors réfugié pres d'elle."*⁴¹

³⁴ Pachymeres, pp.404, 405.

³⁵ Bryer 1989, p. 178-179 (translation verified by Dr. Katherine Vivian).

³⁶ See Map 3.1.

³⁷ Kara pp. 89-102.

³⁸ There is no map of the western line because the author has not yet had the opportunity to examine it as it is close to Düzce, where the earthquake was recently.

³⁹ Quoted from Bryer, *David Komnenos*, p. 178 citing Brosset, *Histoire de la Géorgie*, (Russia: St Petersburg, 1849).

⁴⁰ Akropolites, p. 14, chapter 7 D; Vasiliev, *Foundation* pp. 9-12.

⁴¹ M.-F Brosset, *Histoire de la Géorgie*, (Russia: St. Petersburg, 1849), p. 465 - cited in Bryer, Anthony, 'David Komnenos and Saint Elutherios', *Archeion Pontou*, 42, (Greece: Athens, 1989). P. 178: This translation from Georgian into French was validated for me by Dr. Katherine Vivian in April 1999.

Now if Prof Bryer's proposal is accepted,⁴² as it is by the author, then this list describes two campaigns, one by Alexios that took Lazia, Trebizond, Limon, Amisos (Samsun) and Sinope; and another by David, which took Giresün, Kythora, Amastris and Herakleia.⁴³ No one has ever used the part of this sentence which mentions '*La Paphlagonie*' and '*Le Pont*'. It is quite clear though that they too are part of the list, so they must be accepted as being sequenced in the same way,⁴⁴ thereby implying that the events in 'Paphlagonia' took place after the capture of the cities. This must mean inland areas that were taken later with at least one campaign being fought in the Paphlagonian interior,⁴⁵ which would explain why David made no move against Nikomedia until 1205. This interior campaign⁴⁶ may have been connected with Turkish action around Safranbolu and Araç and Yaşar's implication that Araç was reoccupied suggests an even later campaign in 1213 that is not recorded by Nicaean sources.

Neither Choniates nor Villehardouin mentions any fighting with the Turks around 1204 in north west Anatolia but it is unclear as to whether or not this implies a lack of fighting for as Claude Cahen⁴⁷ points out, silence by the sources does not necessarily mean a lack of action and this view is supported by Ibn Natif who reports frequent fighting between 1211 and the 1230s⁴⁸ along the Kastamonu front. However, Ibn Natif lived in Homs and recorded information supplied

42 Bryer, A, 'David Komnenos and Saint Eleutherios' *Archeion Pontou*, (Greece: Athens 1988-1989).

43 The modern Turkish names of the cities concerned have been used here to aid identification using modern maps.

44 Because his analysis focuses on the Nikomedia raid, Bryer correctly ignores the implications of the words '*... et toute la Paphlagonie et du Pont*'.

45 Booth, Ian, communication delivered March 1998 to Byzantine Studies Spring Symposium at Warwick University with an abstract in *The British Bulletin of Byzantine Studies* 1999, (UK: 1999), p. 79.

46 Booth 1998: The argument is an extension of Bryer's analysis in Bryer 1989.

47 Cahen, *Kastamonu*, pp. 145-151.

48 As it was on the constantly moving 19th Century American frontier.

by visiting diplomats, so he is not the most reliable of sources but it is unlikely that he is very far wrong though it may be that he was fed propaganda in the form of uncheckable tales of successes on far off frontiers rather than the strict truth sometimes. Hence the Byzantine sources failed to report the fighting because it was that sort of low level frontier warfare that was endemic at the time. So like many borders, it was basically stable but with raiding going on across it.

The following passage in a sixteenth century Metabyzantine Hagiography of John III Vatatzes is one of the few comments that refers to Paphlagonia between the two well recorded periods:

*"Further related in these chronological histories are the exploits of certain members from our family of Melissenus, known as the Strategopuli. Tradition says that the Lord John Ducas entrusted the military command of Paphlagonia to Michael, the father of the aforementioned Caesar Alexius. Michael was at the time extremely young. He performed manly exploits against the enemy, resulting in victories, for which he was called thereafter 'Strategopoulos', a name carried also on this account by his sons."*⁴⁹

This again indicates a stable border in the 1230s, possibly even advancing, though as the 'victories' are neither named nor detailed, it is more likely that Michael just repulsed raids or made some successful raids himself.

Any proposal other than the ridge line (above) must be as easy to defend as it is (Map 3) and would need to explain how the breaks in

⁴⁹ Langdon, *Offensive*, pp. 14 and 57 – citing from George Sphrantzes/Macarius Melissenus-Grecu, p. 274 (The full text of this last is published in this book pp. 88-117.

the two inner mountain chains were defended without forts, there being no archaeological evidence of such.⁵⁰

After the mountains the next most helpful factor in favour of a stable border in the area was probably the attitude of the Turkmen to forests. One fifteenth century poem, the *Dede Korkut*, tells us what they thought of the wooded mountains of the Pontos.

"...in ballad 6, Turali's father warns his son against descending from the open yaylas⁵¹ through the dark valleys of the Pontos where armed men lurk deep among the trees to Trebizond:

*'Son, in the place where you would go,
Twisted and tortuous will the roads be;
Swamps there will be, where the red serpent can find no path;
Fortresses there will be, that rub shoulders with the sky...
Your destination is a frightful place. Turn back!'* ⁵²

Thus the Turkmens were never going to like north Paphlagonia. The open steppe land of south Paphlagonia was ideal for them but not the hills of the north with their high rainfall and dense forests. Such attitudes may explain why Çankırı and Kastamonu were conquered by 1090 and never permanently recovered⁵³ whereas the northwest did not fall until after 1300, with some coastal enclaves remaining Christian until much later. The poem also suggests any stable border would run along the forest edge, as the one proposed does.

This then establishes where the frontier ran in North West Anatolia (see maps 3, 4 and 6) for the first half of the 13th Century and, because Michael VIII ruled the same cities in 1267,⁵⁴ there is no

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁵¹ Literally a high mountain meadow in Turkish.

⁵² Bryer 1981, page 119.

⁵³ See Choniates pp. 12-13 for John II's attempts to retake them.

⁵⁴ Pachymeres, p. 404.

reason to believe that it changed much before 1282. The cities of Safranbolu (Saphrapolis) and Bolu (Klaudiopolis) may have been lost under the Angeli, but the *terminus post quem* for the loss of Bolu is 1216 because a will at the Vatopedi Monastery on Athos of a man born at Klaudiopolis does not mention the city.⁵⁵ However, as they were outside the mountain defence line their loss had no serious implications for the stability of the border.⁵⁶ Thus the northern border seems to have been, stable since both losses and gains are known.

Further south on the Meander, the situation, though stable, was not so static. Here the less mountainous nature of the land allows more opportunity for movement, attack and counter-attack. What happened at Tralles in the early 1280s is illustrative. Andronikos II re-established Tralles as a city, as it happened unsuccessfully, but it shows that, up to that time, the Byzantines won some and lost some. He reoccupied an abandoned site on the border; just as Manuel I had done a century before at Dorylaeum. So in 1282 Andronikos II was doing what Manuel I was doing in 1176, moving forward not back!.⁵⁷

So what of the Sangarios frontier which was so repeatedly defended in both the 12th and 13th Centuries by Emperors such as John II Komnenos,⁵⁸ Isaac II Angelos⁵⁹ and John III Vatatzes⁶⁰ and which was still being defended, according to Pachymeres, in 1303 by Andronikos II?⁶¹ Where did it run? Well one thing that can be said

⁵⁵ 'Will of Bishop Paul of Melenik 1216', *Annals of Vatopedi Monastery I*, (France: Paris 200).

⁵⁶ Belke's categorisation, together with visits to 11 of them, was used to decide, which forts were in the lines.

⁵⁷ Failler (Tralles), whole article.

⁵⁸ Choniates and Kinammos.

⁵⁹ Choniates, pp 197-248 (various incidents).

⁶⁰ see Akropolites for John III.

⁶¹ Pachymeres: the last reference to the river in Book XII pages 506, 507 vol. IV: probably 1304.

for certain is that, as map 2 shows, it did not run along the Sangarios River except perhaps in the years after 1295 (approx.). Otherwise it must have moved up and down the valley at right angles to the river east of Malagina.⁶² Because it flows through gorges from just south of Adipazari it is unsuitable as a border itself.

A 'Sangarios Frontier' along one bank of the river is a modern interpretation of Choniates' comments but as is shown by the example below, his descriptions of the campaigns are mostly rather vague. The one following is about John II's campaign in 1139:

*"The Turks were mounting attacks against the defenceless regions along the Sangarios River..."*⁶³

It is historically interesting but impossible to use for determining where the frontier lay.

However Pachymeres comments on the 1281 campaign make that situation quite clear:

*"La cause, disait-il, en était la révolte des zélotes et leur ardeur à pousser les sujets à combattre l'empereur: ..."*⁶⁴

This refers to Imperial Christian subjects that had revolted, which means that the provinces beyond the river were still in imperial hands. But this was not a new problem, for after the 1206 campaign the towns that were forced to join Laskaris, rejoined David Komnenos quickly after Lascaris' troops had gone.

As for the location, we are told that when Michael VIII arrived at the river, he found:

⁶² Map 3 shows the river is the frontier for a short distance around Malagina. It has been put there in the absence of sufficient evidence to put it further east.

⁶³ Choniates p. 19.

⁶⁴ Pachymeres, p. 632/3.

"... les Perses⁶⁵ ... mettent aussi à mal les régions situées en deçà du fleuve. Il rassembla toutes les forces que le temps permettait et que ses affaires toléraient à ce moment, gagne à toute vitesse cette contrée et traverse le Sangrias." ⁶⁶

It is quite clear here that he crossed the river, which he must have done by the Ankara Highway and confirms that the trouble was located where Laskaris campaigned between 1205 and 1211. Presumably Michael VIII moved quickly because he wanted to restrict the rebellion to that single region. This emphasises that the north-south section of the Sangarios River, Karasu to Malagina, was not the border and that the area to its east was still in Byzantine hands until at least 1282, disloyal and in cahoots with the Turks,⁶⁷ certainly, but still Byzantine. This does not suggest that the border had changed since 1208 and would probably have remained unchanged had Michael's religious policy more reasonable. However, as Kafadar shows, by the end of the century the area had turned into a set of fragmented semi-independent statelets, some Moslem and some Christian.⁶⁸

Also as the raiders crossed the river, then, if we accept that Michael VIII crossed it near Adıpaazarı,⁶⁹ they almost certainly lived in the

⁶⁵ The word 'Persians' to refer to the Turks or Turkmens is not an archaism as I have often seen suggested but a very sensible method of referring to a group a people whose origins, relevant to Byzantium, was the lands of the former Persian Empire. It also needs to be realised that there is also no evidence that these tribes had, at that time, a common name for themselves.

⁶⁶ Pachmeres, p. 632/3.

⁶⁷ One should not make too much of this as these Turks may have been employed by the local Byzantines.

⁶⁸ For the nature of Bithynian politics in the very early 14th century, see Kafadar, Chapters 2 and 3.

⁶⁹ There are no other suitable crossings of the river that would lead to a fruit growing area.

region for its topography is such as to make that pretty certain.⁷⁰ There is no evidence of where the Turks came from, so they probably already lived there. For, as suggested above, the resident Turks of the area probably worked as village guards, which metier involves a degree of military expertise. However, this form of part-time military guard duty is a semi-specialism⁷¹ with their main specialism being herding. Thus it is obvious why Michael VIII's professional troops won easily: the local part timers simply did not have either the arms or the training to face them.

Thus between 1181 and 1282, Achyraous, Lopadion, Prusa, Nicaea, Nikomedia, Prousius⁷², Malagina, Heracleia Pontica, Tios, Amastris, Kromna, Kytoros all remained in Byzantine hands. This list defines a long thin vulnerable strip of country. Of these only Achyraous, the most westerly, was lost before 1294 and this city was retaken by Alexios Philanthropenos in that year.⁷³ It is often suggested that the Empire had a weak hold on its Anatolian possessions but the stability of the frontier denies this, though the fact that the first of these cities to fall was the most westerly poses a number of interesting questions.

Candar Bey captured Eflâni (Map 4)⁷⁴ in 1291 but from whom? There is no indication in either the Turkish or Arab histories and the event is not mentioned by any Byzantine source. However, until the Turkmen uprising in Kastamonu of 1291 to 1293⁷⁵ internal

⁷⁰ For the question of Turkish access via the Ankara Highway through Bolu, see below.

⁷¹ Khazanov, pp. 15-84, this gives an excellent introduction to the topic.

⁷² Foss (Malagina), p. 174: he believes that this area was lost in the 1220s but Pachymeres suggests otherwise.

⁷³ Laiou, 1978, p. 93.

⁷⁴ Kara, pp. 102 & 221, In both cases this the information comes from Gökoğlu, Ahmet, *Paphlagonia*, (Turkey: Kastamonu, 1952), p. 147.

⁷⁵ Cahen Kastamonu and

conditions in the Kastamonu area were quiet, so it must have been taken from Byzantium.

Ostrogorsky, Vasiliev and Pitcher⁷⁶ all show Eflâni as Selçuk⁷⁷ in the 13th century but this view has severe topographical problems because the 'basin' around Eflâni provides good access to the Parthenios River⁷⁸ valley and thereby to Filyos, Bartın and Amasra⁷⁹ and may well have been on the route taken by the 1267 raid. Had it been Selçuk before 1258 then there would have been Byzantine forts in the area but Belke does not record any. Also it would have been 'peaceful' until 1291, whereas Ibn Sa'id indicates that the road through this gap was closed in the 1270s. Thus it cannot have been in Selçuk hands in the 1270s or the route from Herakleia to Kastamonu would have gone through Safranbolu instead of using the more difficult road through Daday implied by Ibn Sa'id's comments of the 1270s.⁸⁰ Öztuna's comment on this is:

*"1308 solarına kada 17 yıl Eflâni kasabası merkez olmuş, 1308 sonlarında Kastamonu'ya nakledilmiştir."*⁸¹

Korobeinikov, paper delivered to the 20th Congrès International des Etudes Byzantine, August 2001, on the subject of the Rebellion (awaiting publication).

⁷⁶ Pitcher, *Map*, The map of the Selcuks of Rum.

⁷⁷ The maps are usually dated about 1215 or 1220 though others have used a similar one for as late as 1243.

⁷⁸ Now the Bartın River.

⁷⁹ Tios, Parthenios and Amastris. Tios is sometimes called Teion.

⁸⁰ The author recognises that there are problems with this argument and that these can only be solved by further research on the ground. However it is not inconceivable that Eflâni was a bandit town prior to 1291 but unlikely because of its geographical position. The only Byzantine fort in the area is in a most odd position that cannot easily be explained. Indeed the most likely answer is that Safranbolu was actually semi-independent and uncooperative with the Greeks.

⁸¹ Öztuna p. 207 "Until the end of 1308 for 17 years the small town of Eflâni was the centre, at the end of 1308 it was moved to Kastamonu." He does not give his source.

which looks conclusive for no one would willingly use Eflâni as his capital (*merkez*). The situation of the village is so poor and isolated that the only possible reason for choosing it would be that there was no alternative. Also this places the fall of Eflâni in 1291, which agrees with what Kara says.⁸² Thus there are two possible views of the border in the Eflâni area in the 1270s and 1280s and no way of deciding between them.

Manuel II's famous letter about northern Anatolia, which speaks of the Christians having fled to the hills,⁸³ suggests that the refuges of a hundred years earlier, the Araç Defence line, were still in use because of the disturbed nature of the times. Though a century later, the Ottoman campaign moved along the valley of the Araç Çayı, so his description fits the line of forts and villages in the hills behind Araç. Ostrogorsky proposed that the anchor point of this border was Kerempe Burunu and there is no reason to think that such was not the case for the northern turn of the Araç defence line points directly at that cape.

*

So why is Paphlagonia important to the defence of the Empire?

At first, it is hard to see how this rough rural province could seriously contribute to the state's defence, especially as the 16th Century Ottoman census returns and the lack of Byzantine remains⁸⁴ emphasise just how few and under-populated its cities were.⁸⁵

⁸² Kara, pp. 102 & 221 What he says on p. 102 is "*Yani Osmanlı için söğüt be ise Candar Oğulları için Eflâni idur.*" On p.221 he says that the Candaroğulları replaced the Çobanoğulları in 1309 after 18 years at Eflâni.

⁸³ Letters p.42 Letter 16.

⁸⁴ Crow and Hill 1995, whole article shows this.

⁸⁵ Farouqi, Sarayia, *Towns and Townsmen in Anatolia 1520 to 1640*, (England: London 1989, pp. 104-113 + extracted statistics extracted from other chapters.

However, it is clear that Laskaris saw it as important in 1206 and 1208 when he attacked David Komnenos,⁸⁶ despite the risks.

Bryer's view that David aimed to reconquer Constantinople⁸⁷ (Map 5) is probably true and may be part of the reason for this attack but Henri de Valenciennes⁸⁸ words imply that in 1208 David was, as Miller believed,⁸⁹ already a Latin vassal and not as Choniates thought their ally,⁹⁰ which shows that David too realised that he could not win until his native competitors were eliminated.

The 1205 campaign is only recorded in two texts, both by Niketas Choniates when he was either a supplicant before Theodore I Laskaris or a dependent of his. So, when it is looked at seriously, the idea that the successful David would send an inexperienced general to attack Nikomedia is improbable. He might though have tried him out on a reconnaissance mission. So the 1205 campaign seems more likely to be minor clash that has had its importance overstated by a man who wanted to get something out of the person to whom he presented his piece.

Laskaris, unlike his opponents, was without allies in a four-sided war. For him the years 1204 to 1214 were dark days when he lost much of what he started with. He made some gains in 1206 but only at great risk and then lost them later. In 1211 he was so badly beaten that had it not been for events elsewhere he would probably have lost his throne. It is usually assumed that he was defeated in the 1208 campaign but in fact de Valenciennes does not mention any fighting

⁸⁶ Choniates, p. 352.

⁸⁷ Bryer 1989, p. 178, He calls the conquest '*his grandfather's prize*'.

Miller neither states this nor seem to support it.

Vasiliev supports it without being specific: he says, '*... no limit to his ambitions*'.

⁸⁸ Valenciennes p. 51.

⁸⁹ Miller, p. 17.

⁹⁰ Choniates p. 351.

between Laskaris and Henri. He was, as the Americans say, advancing towards the rear.

Many modern historians have taken Mesarites comments of 1214 to mean that Laskaris took Paphlagonia in that year, which is not what Mesarites says. He only says that Laskaris was in Paphlagonia putting down recalcitrant nobles. Akropolites though places the campaign between Laskaris' defeat by the Sultan at Antioch and his defeat by Henri de Hainault later in the year. No one else is so positive or says that he took Paphlagonia in 1214, so we must accept Akropolites view that it occurred in 1211.

Indeed so weak was Laskaris' position in both years that Cahen even proposed that he agreed a secret treaty with the Sultan, whilst he was a captive. A very convenient explanation were it not so ridiculous. Why would the Sultan sign a secret treaty with someone that he held captive unless it was bad for the captive?

The Arab historian Makrizi, amongst other things, says for the year 611 AH:

*"Cette année, le sultan du pays de Roûm, Izz-ad-din-Kai Kâous-ibn-Kai-Khosrav-ibn-Kilidj-Arslân, le Seldjoukide, remporta une victoire complète sur Lascaris, empereur des Grecs. »*⁹¹

which confirms that he was completely defeated at Antioch. The new sultan had problems establishing his authority, so it is possible that he made such a treaty but Ibn Bibi does not mention it.

Abou'l-Feda says nothing of the battle but speaks of the events the following of it, the only person to do so:

"An 611 de l'hégire (1214-1215 J.C.)

⁹¹ Makrizi, p. 305.

Les Turcomans, ayant fait prisonnier le roi Lascaris, le même que tua Chiath ed-Din Cai-Khosrou, le livrèrent à Cai-Caous, fils de ce prince. Cai-Caous voulut le faire mourir ; mais ayant obtenu du prisonnier une forte somme d'argent et la cession de plusieurs châteaux et villes que les Musulmans n'avaient pas encore possédés, (il lui rendit la liberté). » ⁹²

So this confirms that Laskaris lost some land, paid a ransom and made an agreement. This was Laskaris' opportunity to come to an arrangement with the Sultan and he took it though there is no other documentary evidence of this. He was already in possession of Paphlagonia so Cahen's suggestion of him being tacitly allowed to take it over is impossible. Also the formula that he paid a huge ransom and ceded several towns and fortresses that the Moslems had never held before is often a Moslem literary formula for hiding a defeat. In this case though that is not probably, for Langdon has shown that John III in 1223 took a more westerly road than his father used when he went to Nymphaion. We now know for certain that Laskaris was captured.

Our problem is that no text of this treaty has survived, so we know only its observable effects but not its terms. However, it was not a secret to Abulfeda.

*

Only one other event needs to be considered here but not in detail. In 1214 the Sultan took Sinope, cutting off Paphlagonia from the Empire of Trebizond and Laskaris off from any possibility of consolidating Byzantine power along the north coast of Anatolia. This permanently shortened the coast under Byzantine rule and made Paphlagonia a salient. However, it should be noted that despite

⁹² Abulfeda p. 87.

having had three years to recover, Laskaris made no effort to aid Sinope.

Let us now look at what little is known of the relationship between Laskaris and the Paphlagonians and what can be surmised.

Choniates description of the 1206 campaign is telling:

*"He forced his way into Plousias, ... and nullified her friendship with David, and he would have taken Herakleia and forced David to take flight, had not the Latins encamped at Nikomedia provided assistance to David... thus placing Lascaris in a precarious position."*⁹³

Paphlagonia did not welcome him, yet Laskaris hovered long over whether to attack Nikomedia or Herakleia⁹⁴ before finally doing the obvious and attacking Nikomedia. However, as soon as his troops left the towns he had occupied needed little persuasion to return to David: and this report comes from a pro-Laskarid historian!

So why did Henri de Hainault not aid of his vassal in late 1211? He did so very quickly in 1208 according to Valenciennes who makes it clear that David had been his vassal for some time and did not become so just to deal with this one crisis.

Undoubtedly David's reason for choosing Latin vassalage was to ensure his survival but isn't that the point of feudalism, the weak become vassals of the strong to get protection. Indeed the disaster that attended Laskaris' precipitous retreat from Herakleia in 1208 when he heard that the Emperor Henri was coming shows that David chose correctly. On the other hand, for Laskaris it had led to many of his men being drowned in the 'river',⁹⁵ because as Valenciennes'

⁹³ Choniates p. 351.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*

⁹⁵ Valenciennes, p. 52, Thought by Longnon to be the Sangarios.

suggests '*Laskaris was afraid of being cut off from the rest of his empire*' (Maps 2 & 3).⁹⁶

Henri, a great supporter of his vassals, went to Anatolia in the autumn of 1211 largely to avenge the death of Pierre de Bracheux whom Laskaris had killed the year before.⁹⁷ But why did he not go to David's aid, for after the campaign he was in a position to dictate whatever terms he wanted to Laskaris? We don't know but the most probable answer is that David was no longer around, so it was no longer possible to help him. We may guess too that he was not removed by Laskaris because had he done it then Henri would have punished him for doing so.

So why, whilst David was still in power, did Laskaris risk attacking Herakleia, given the difficult terrain and David being a Latin vassal?⁹⁸ Indeed when the Turks at Bolu are added into the equation, any strike through Plousias was fraught with danger.⁹⁹ Map 3 shows just how slender Paphlagonia's connection was to the rest of the empire even after the reimposition of imperial authority in 1211: the connection was a single narrow road that even in the 1960s was not a main road. It is thus clear that Valenciennes' analysis for 1208 rings truer than Choniates' for 1206. Being cut off from one's heartlands can be fatal!

However, Choniates makes it clear that in 1206 Laskaris wanted desperately to attack Herakleia despite the danger '*from the Latins at Nikomedia*'¹⁰⁰ and that he was not being irrational for his graphically described hesitation shows that he understood the dangers fully, so he must have had a good reason for wanting the place. It may be though

⁹⁶ *ibid.*

⁹⁷ Longnon, *Campaign*, pp 444-445.

⁹⁸ Villehardouin pp. 128-129.

⁹⁹ See also, Vasiliev, pp.17-24, Miller pp.14-19, Bryer, p. 174-187.

¹⁰⁰ Choniates p. 351.

that his reasons were political in that David was a Komnenos, the grandson of Andronikos I. So Laskaris had to challenge him because he had a better claim to the title than he did and was a more better general.

In fact in 1211, he was incredibly lucky.¹⁰¹ He lost the battle of Antioch and had the Sultan not been killed all would have gone ill for him but ironically his best stroke of luck was being captured for this gave him the opportunity to negotiate agreed borders with the new Sultan, something that he had not had before.¹⁰² Indeed it is probable that the Sultan only agreed such because he had to deal with his rebellious brothers, but nevertheless this important concession seems to have been made and to have survived for many years.

Then later that year,¹⁰³ the Emperor Henri's invasion of September was so effective that Laskaris had to cede the whole of Scamander, Optimaton and the Marmora shore by the 'Treaty of Nymphaion',¹⁰⁴ that split Laskaris' holdings into two, with an area of doubtful loyalty in the Southwest and his Bithynian heartland in the north with the Latin fortress of Achyraous between them. He now had no direct connection either by land or by sea between the two parts.¹⁰⁵ But he did gain agreed borders again because this was something that Henri needed as much as he did.

¹⁰¹ Langdon, Thesis, Chapter 2 suggests 1210.

¹⁰² There was, according to Choniates, a tacit agreement with the Sultan before this but that had clearly not stood up to the pressure of real politics.

¹⁰³ No source proves that there was trouble along the Paphlagonian border in 1214 though Cahen (Kastamonu) has shown that Ibn Na'if al Hamawi's history describes such fighting and that as the Emir Qizil is mentioned then this has to be in that area.

¹⁰⁴ This is a modern name given to the cessions made by Laskaris and detailed by Akropolites. Nymphaion is in the south of Laskaris' possessions not far north of the Meander river.

¹⁰⁵ Langdon, Thesis, pp. 64ff, for a full discussion; also Langdon, pp.43-44 note 4.

Akropolites statement that he extended his rule to include Paphlagonia is sandwiched between his reports of the two disasters so it must have happened in 1211 but it mentions no fighting, which is strange for a writer who is obviously fond of recounting battles and also the verb used (χρᾶτόυντο)¹⁰⁶ means 'asserting authority over' rather than military defeat. It can mean military occupation but it does not have to. Also, if its sense were military then 'Where did Laskaris get his troops from?' Langdon points, correctly, both that there were no troops available and that if there were they could not have fought first in the south, then in Paphlagonia and finally in the north west, all in one year.

Akropolites says:

In a series [*of actions*]¹⁰⁷ the emperor Theodore prevailed over David lord of Paphlagonia, and he took back into his dominion Herakleia, Amastris, the places in it and all the towns.¹⁰⁸

This language too does not rule out a negotiated settlement.

So why did Akropolites not describe the campaign in Paphlagonia?

He was writing a history book some sixty years after the event and like all historians was able to look back on the events and decide which were important and which were not. And he would also have had to select on this basis what information he considered important for inclusion in the book. It is unlikely therefore that his view should agree with that of someone who was present at the time. He would not though have lacked detail for as Megas Logothetes he had access

¹⁰⁶ Spelt with a χ instead of a κ in the Bonn (Bekker) edition of 1838.

¹⁰⁷ This idiom is vague for the word 'actions' does not appear in the Greek but is assumed and therefore inserted in accordance with normal Greek practice but it is possible that it should be another word, say 'discussions'.

¹⁰⁸ Acropolites, Chapter 11: p. 20 translated ILB

to both those who knew about the events and all the official documents referring to it.

Paphlagonia was Laskaris' one conquest, so he had to include it but why did he not describe that campaign? The most probable reason is that there was no campaign because the locals negotiated a settlement with Laskaris.¹⁰⁹ It would have been that way round because Laskaris was too weak for it to be otherwise and the locals would have got the terms they wanted. Indeed there are clear indications of this in the troubles of 1267 and 1280 to 1282.

Pachymeres accuses disgruntled border guards of having guided the 1267 raiders to the estates of the Emperor and his friends. In 1281 Michael accused the Zealots, who opposed his religious policy, of being the cause of the trouble. For 1267, there were financial and conditions of employment grievances but in the 1280s the cause is less certain for 'religious opposition' is often a sign of other problems just as high pay demands are in industrial relations in modern Britain or religion is in Northern Ireland politics.

So why did Laskaris want Paphlagonia?

Aside from the politics mentioned above, he probably wanted Paphlagonia for strategic reasons for the Ankara Highway, once one of the most important Anatolian roads, ran just south of his border alongside the Bolu Dağları with Bolu (Klaudiopolis) being the last Turkish city before the border at Bolu Geçidi (Bolu Pass), an obvious forward base for the invasion of Laskaris' domains.

¹⁰⁹ Clearly there might have been some fighting that is not mentioned by Akropolites. However if these were unimportant then he would probably have left it out because like any other historian he had to decide which facts to include and which to leave out.

However, topographically Bolu is vulnerable for there are only two roads capable of being used by an army that turn north off from the Ankara Highway between Adıpaazarı and Gerede and none turn south. The more westerly of these was Byzantium's road to Paphlagonia (Düzce to Ereğli) until at least 1282. The other connects the cities of Ereğli (Herakleia) and Filyos (Teion) with Yeniçağı, on the Ankara Highway, east of Bolu. Yeniçağı has no other importance here than other than as the only place where the Ankara Highway could be cut by Byzantine forces east of Bolu but this placed Bolu in the unenviable position of being open to attack from both east and west without having an escape route.

There is no documentary evidence that this manoeuvre was ever used but fighting was reported along this border between 1211 and 1228¹¹⁰ and Michael Melissenos¹¹¹ successfully campaigned in Paphlagonia in the 1230s & 1240s but no details have survive in either case. All one can say is that the Imperial forces must have had a properly ordered set of bases etc. to enable them to hold that border for so long.

The three breaks in the coastal ranges at Zonguldak, Bartın and Çaycuma are too wide to be defended without fortresses and no known remains exist and none of the village names suggest any.¹¹² The passes around Devrek are easy to defend but good for raiding the flat lands to the south as the trees end near the summit and probably always did. So with only on narrow pass, the ridge of Bolu Dağları was easy to defend.

This scenario refers to armies not Turkmen raiders. In fact it is unlikely that at this time the Turkmen raiders were a significant force

¹¹⁰ See note 30.

¹¹¹ see above.

¹¹² Except Hisarönü, which means 'castle village' but which is better known as the City of Teion.

and it is thus unlikely that they would have figured highly in Laskaris' calculations. By the 1270s the situation was different for as Ibn Sa'id tells us there were sizable groups of Turkmen grouped around Kastamonu, Ankara and Kütahya, who had fled Mongol rule. And both Ibn Sa'id and Pachymeres have indicated that these were active both around Safranbolu and Bolu¹¹³ but Pachymeres says that they fled at Michael's approach, so they were not in a position to overwhelm the Empire in the 1280s.

Similarly Turkmen would not have worried David because their numbers were not yet large nor Laskaris, until 1211, as he had David to keep them occupied. Choniates does mention losses to the Turks by David and Alexios but does not say where or when. They may well have been taken by regular troops. The names of the cities lost are not given but Safranbolu and Bolu are the most likely.

Laskaris' nightmare must have been that the Sultan would consolidate his hold in the north by taking all David's holdings, for then any Ghazis would have moved westward to the new border, which with the Latins holding Nikomedia and most of the Marmara shore, would almost certainly have been the end of Laskaris too.

However, by 1214, he already held Paphlagonia and defending it was not difficult for according to Pachymeres the Paphlagonian hill-men were not going to surrender so long as their privileges were maintained. Effectively Laskaris vastly increased the length of his border in 1211, so that the Kastamonu Ghazis had to fight on two fronts, whilst the Ankara Ghazis had no access to his lands because they were out-flanked at Bolu. Indeed there is no known instance of Bolu being used as a forward base in the 13th century. So this strategy kept the Ghazis (if they existed before 1282) away from his heartlands and took some of the pressure off Trebizond, thereby helping them to survive.

¹¹³ *ibid*, p. 44.

So, did taking Paphlagonia do what Lascar's wanted? Yes, north-west Paphlagonia is a natural fortress and perfect for the job.¹¹⁴

This was not though a popular occupation. Basically the cities and towns of Paphlagonia seem to have been almost independent when David regrouped them in 1208 and, from what Mesarites says in 1214/5, some did not accept the agreement of 1211. Thus any reimposition of imperial bureaucracy and direct rule was always going to be difficult. The most obvious case was Sinope for Ibn Bibi's description of the Sultan's siege includes a dramatic scene where the citizens refuse to ransom Alexios of Trebizond and watch him being tortured. Other indications too suggest that Sinope was independent at the time. So perhaps Alexios had gone there to try to retake it. However, it is the only one for which we have definite information, others were probably similar in their attitudes.

It is also notable that this border corresponds closely both to the edge of the principally Greek speaking world and the outer edge of the borders of the antique Greek states of northern Anatolia.¹¹⁵

Laskaris was very weak when Paphlagonia joined him, so the cities almost certainly became a set of self governing units that acknowledged imperial authority but within agreed limits, which would explain quite why, as Angold notes, not even the title of the Imperial official that ruled Paphlagonia is known for this period.¹¹⁶ And when one considers that its connection with the rest of the Empire was a single narrow road, a degree of self-rule is not

¹¹⁴ Indeed in the late 1960's the Turkish government kept a large force of troops there to defend it in the event of a Soviet invasion for this very reason. I was told this by a Turkish major who was in charge of the local military district and who taught military science at Zonguldak Koleji, where I worked at the time.

¹¹⁵ Sartre, p. 336.

¹¹⁶ Angold, p. 240.

unexpected. Thus there would be no need for an official governor.¹¹⁷ So though a useful province, it needed careful handling, which it got under John III and Theodore II but not under the Palaeologoi.

As Melissenos could win victories, Paphlagonia¹¹⁸ was definitely part of a military system that worked but, according to Pachymeres. It was not fully integrated with the rest of the Empire, as it was before 1204. There are though too many examples of medieval states being made up of virtually self-governing parts for this option to be ignored.

Pachymeres states that all the lands east of the Sangarios passed into barbarian hands in 1267¹¹⁹ but this is inconsistent with his statement that in 1281 '*the lands beyond the Sangarios weakened*'.¹²⁰ It is though consistent with his blame objective. So in reality this must mean that the Empire still held land east of the Sangarios where it flows north from Malagina to its outfall at Karasu. Also Bartusis has shown that Pachymeres numbers for the army are consistently higher than those given by other sources,¹²¹ so clearly he is given to exaggeration.

Pachymeres says that in 1281 fruit from the trees was lying on the ground after the raid, which indicates that they were not cut down as was usually in such raids, which might, of course, have been because the 'raiders' owned the trees! So perhaps Michael VIII should be forgiven for being less active than Pachymeres thought he should be, for it looks as if the situation was less serious than he suggests.¹²²

¹¹⁷ Ibid pp. 98-99 and p. 240.

¹¹⁸ Langdon p. 13 (see above for the quotation)

Cahen, Kastamonu pp. 145-149.

¹¹⁹ Pachymeres pp. 404, 405.

¹²⁰ ibid, pp. 243, 245, 505, 634.

¹²¹ Bartusis, Mark, *The Late Byzantine Army: arms and society 1204-1453*, pp 263-265.

¹²² Failler 1981, p. II, 246.

Moreover, Michael's appearance there three times in three years does suggest that he took the matter seriously.¹²³ Worse, he clearly states that Michael won but still blames him for the failure under Andronikos II. So looked at dispassionately it seems that the area remained Byzantine after 1282, something that it certainly would not have done had Paphlagonia not been behind it securely held and a constant threat to anyone trying to cross the Sangarios by Ankara Highway.

*

Could it be that Laskaris had nationalist reasons for occupying Paphlagonia?

This is unlikely for neither the historians of the day nor the researches of Michael Angold or Alice Gardner found any evidence of such. Indeed his failure to help either Attaleia in 1207 or Sinope in 1214 plus his lack of interest in Rhodes show that uniting the Greek nation was not a high priority. His campaigns seem to be limited to the area that his father in law controlled prior to 1204, making his main interest the reassembling of Alexios III's empire. Indeed if one accepts that this one aim drove Laskaris then his actions make sense before 1211 and also after, if one assumes that by then he had realised that he would never succeed and thus made sure of what he had got.

So can one postulate what lay behind Laskaris' policy for the eastern border?

Well yes, by putting the above together, Paphlagonia's importance stems not only from its strategic location and its ability to cover the approaches to Laskaris' dominions but from the fact that it was in Alexios III's empire. It was Alice Gardner's view that he went

¹²³ Pachymeres, 474/5, 502/3, 524/5.

initially to Asia Minor as Alexios' viceroy. So he may have seen it as his duty to reconstruct what he had lost before doing anything else. The fact that it was held by a serious challenger must have been important but probably not overpoweringly so.

Did Laskaris originally intend to extend his holdings along the coast towards Trebizond?

Probably not. Sinope was close at hand but he never made any attempt. Indeed, though Laskaris built fleets on both the Aegean and Marmara Seas, he never did so on the Black Sea, where Byzantium had previously had a naval monopoly. This alone suggests that he had no eastward ambitions from Paphlagonia. Also no later emperor was any more active than he in this respect.

Did the Turks pose a real military threat to Byzantium before 1282?

Curiously the Turks have played little part in this discussion except for the fall of Sinope, and indirectly the Battle of Antioch, in the far south. So, despite most modern historians supporting the view that, because they were the eventual heirs of Byzantium, they were the main threat and despite the fact that the Byzantine ruling elite believed this too, it is not certain that they were, yet.

Indeed their victories are unimpressive, falling into two types, those over small isolated detached sections of the Empire and the battle of Antioch, which they won but were unable to exploit. All their victories were won by armies and not 'Ghazis' raids. The Sultanate though was unstable in the sense that each Sultan had to fight a civil war to establish his position. Its many victories after the mid-twelfth century were mostly in the east and even Myrioccephalum gained them nothing in west Anatolia. The Turks were more a perceived threat than a real one, which is probably why astute men like Alexios I and John II did not consolidate their hold on the area

between the Sangarios and the Bolu dağları. Manuel I did this in 1143 but this may well have had more to do with Manuel's love of winning victories than any real problem.

So what of the Ghazis?

What does Pachymeres say of them? The words '*the Kastamonu Persians*'¹²⁴ in Pachymeres description of the *Defeat of the Heterarque Mouzalon at Nicomedia* (the Battle of Bapheus, 27th July 1302) is often taken by modern historians to mean the Ghazis of Kastamonu, though all it actually says is that they were Turks from Kastamonu. They may have been regular¹²⁵ troops for by 1302 Candar Bey's new state at Eflâni was eleven years old and Kastamonu had briefly settled down again to Ilkhanid rule after the rebellion of 1291-1292.¹²⁶ Also Kastamonu still acknowledged Ilkhanid authority until about 1330 by its ruler using the title Vali (governor of a province), but there little doubt that after 1307 it was almost independent, so troops may have been sent to Osman despite the nominal alliance between Constantinople and Tabriz. The question that comes from reading Pachymeres is, 'What Ghazis?'

*

In conclusion, one must admit that Laskaris is not a heroic figure. He was a poor general and an uninspired leader, who survived for eighteen years, eventually leaving his successor, John III, something to build on. Perhaps at the time that was the best that anyone could have done. His greatest achievement was to establish a frontier in northwest Anatolia that lasted until the 1290s. He seems after 1211 to have concentrated on survival and to have achieved that aim. He deserves credit for this fact alone, a lot of credit.

¹²⁴ Pachymeres, IV p. 359.

¹²⁵ In so far as such existed at the time.

¹²⁶ A very simplified view.

John III's long reign, and his son's short one showed little change along this frontier and probably got no worse for the Byzantines after the battle of Kūşadağ, 26th June 1242. Indeed things may have got better in the north east for until 1291 the province of Kastamonu was quiet and orderly under the Mongols. Indeed it was sufficiently well ruled in the 1270s that its revenues could be signed over to the Ilkhans for the payment of a debt.

Michael VIII seems to have guarded it adequately but to have fallen out with his Paphlagonian subjects and it is this latter probably caused its collapse in the first quarter of the 14th century.

So the north east border of Byzantium in the 13th century was stable and adequately defended despite what Choniates and Pachymeres say, when events alone are considered and their views ignored. Both histories were written to explain a disaster, Choniates 1204, and Pachymeres the loss of Anatolia under Andronikos II.

The question asked was, 'What happened and what was the result?' The answers are based only upon what appear to be facts. The Turkmen have been described by analogy. All guesstimates as to what the various rulers thought at the time are based on Prof. Ian Short's¹²⁷ view that our point of contact with the medieval world is the emotions of its actors. All in all this approach has produced an unexpected result.

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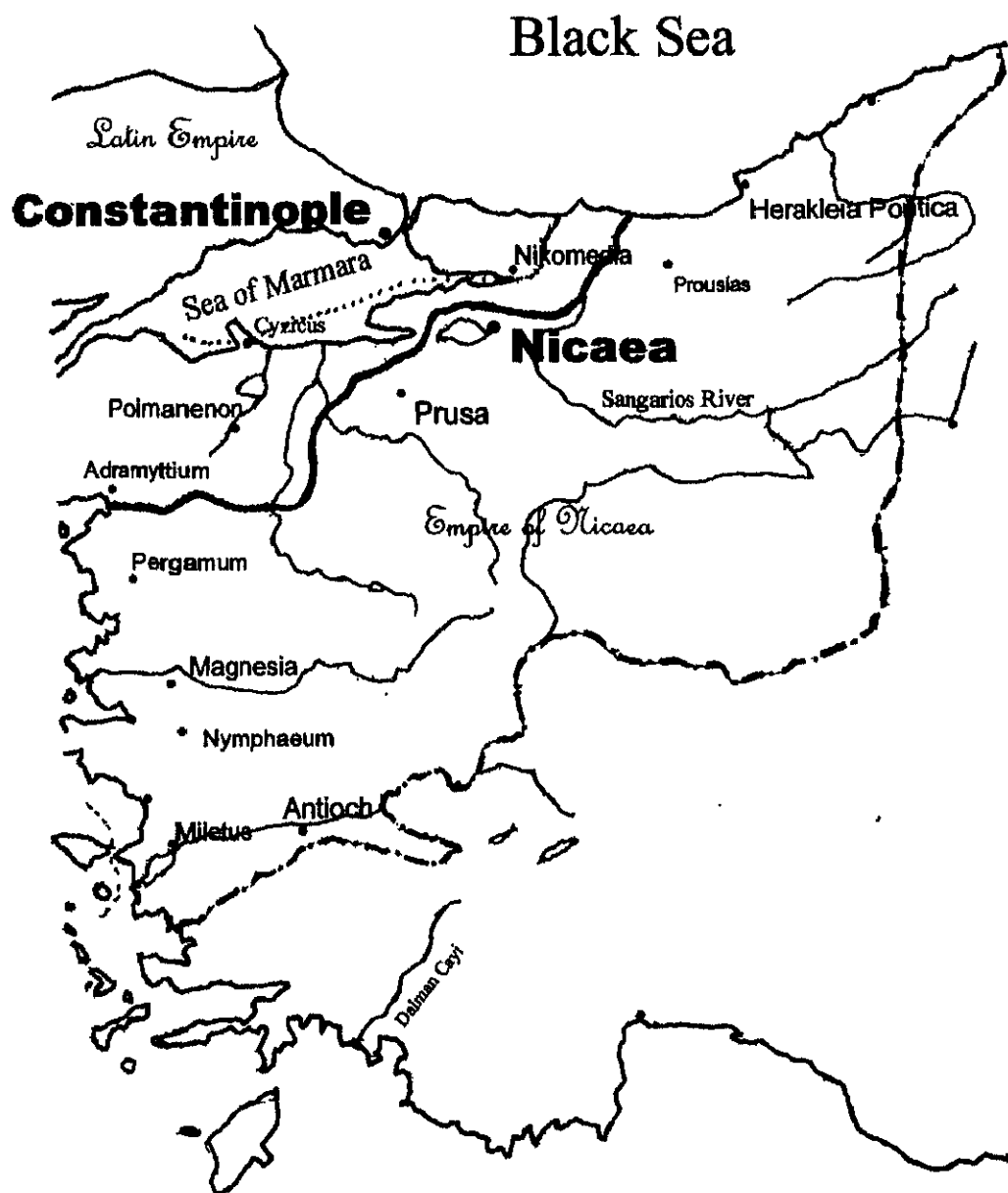
¹²⁷ Director of the MA in Medieval Studies at Birkbeck College University of London in October 2000.

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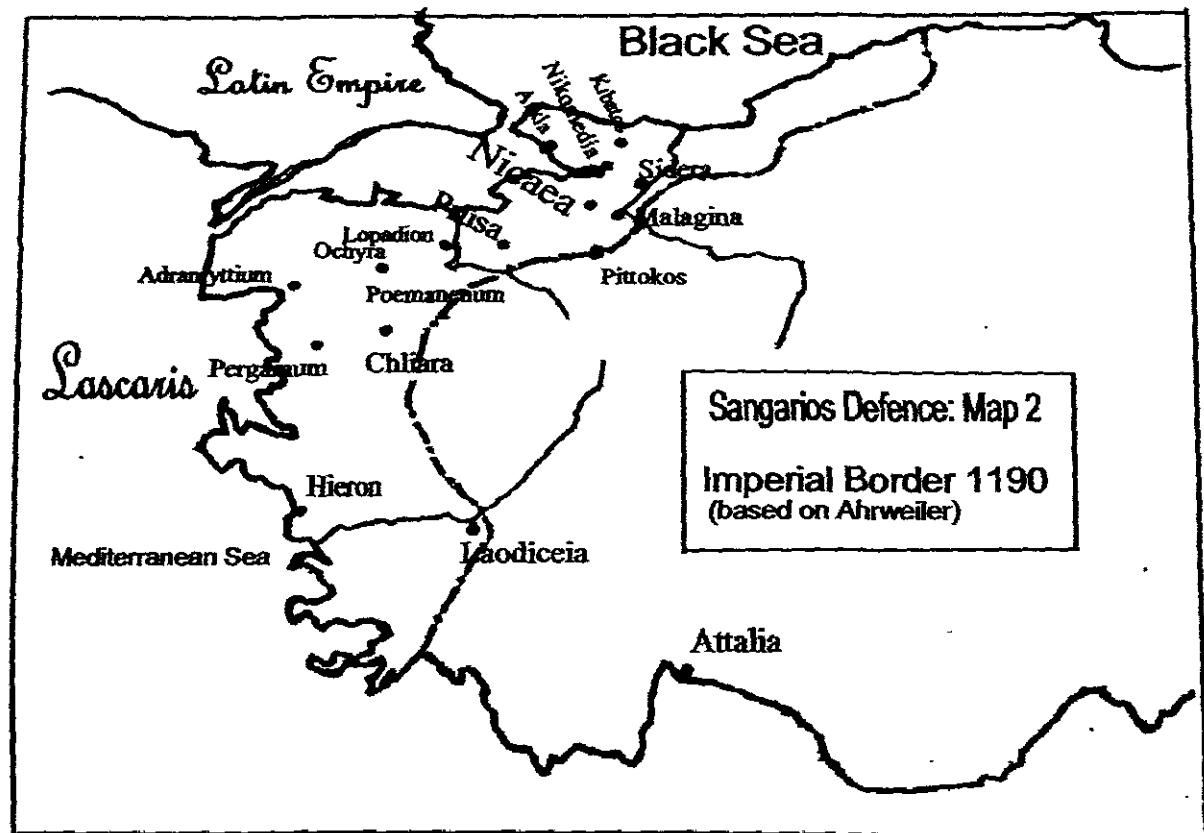
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**Sangarios Defence - Map 1: The Nicean Empire
as seen by Ostrogorsky for 1212**

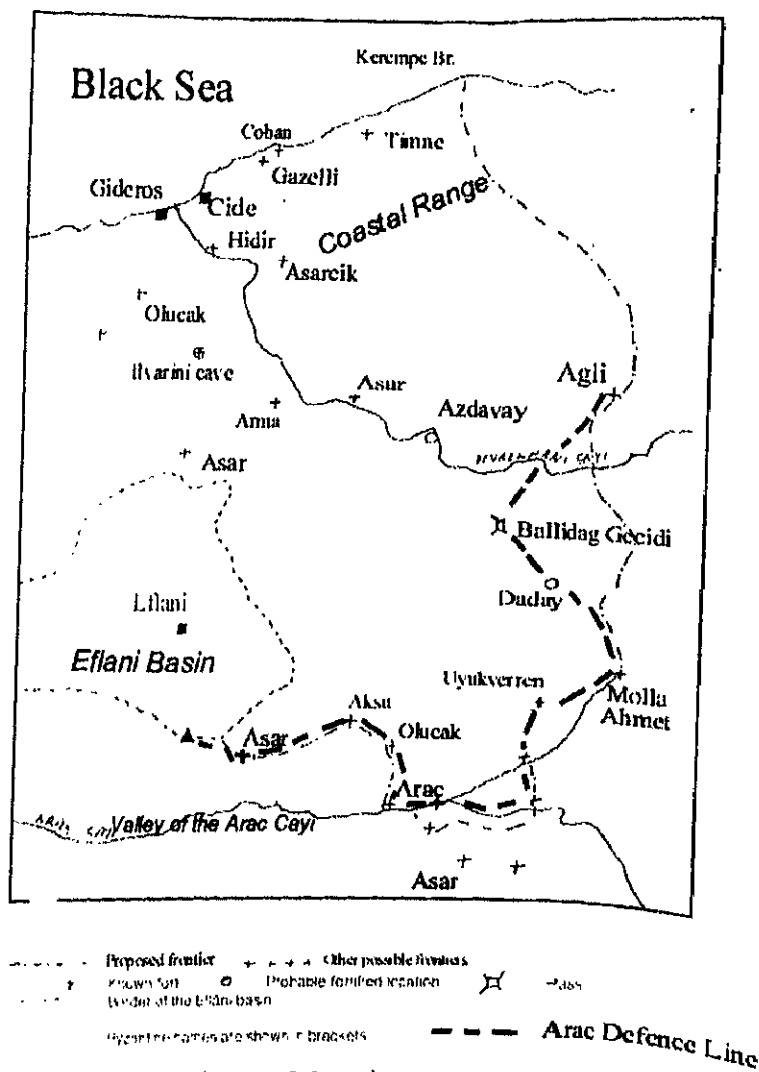


SD Map 3 (3462x2309x16M jpeg)



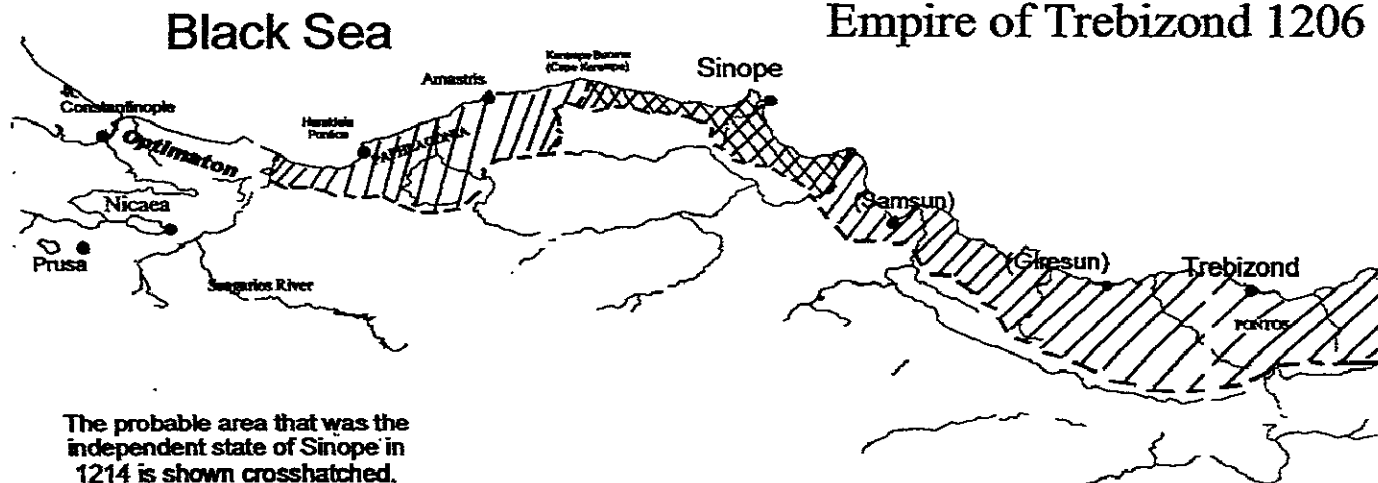
- Border of Latin Empire in Bithynia 1205
- Border of Latin Empire in Bithynia 1211-22
- - - - - Eastern Border of Nicaean Empire 1214 - 1282

Paphlagonia in the
13th Century
Sangarios Defense: Map 3



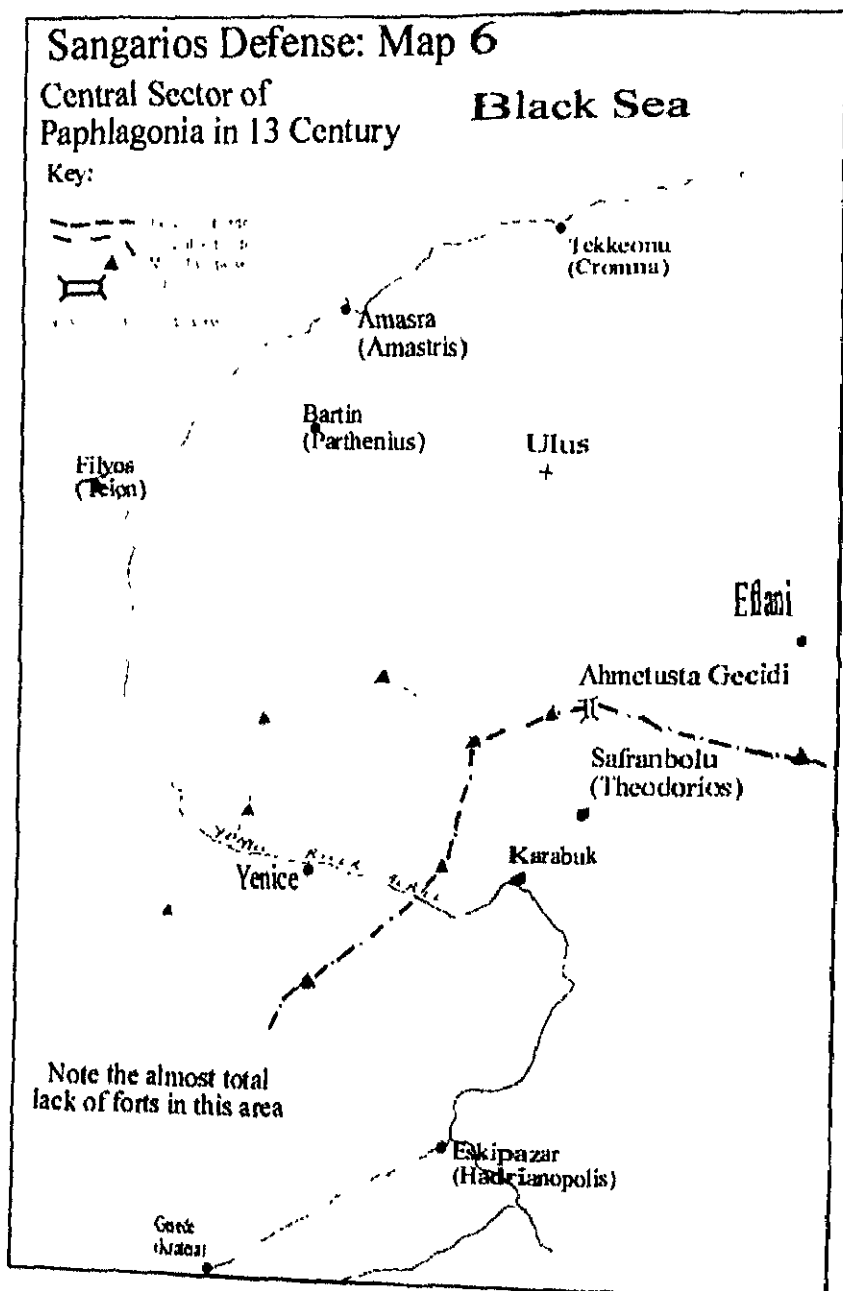
Sangarios Defence: Map 4
The forts of Eastern Paphlagonia (existing remains)

Sangarios Defence: Map 5: Empire of Trebizond 1206



The probable area that was the independent state of Sinope in 1214 is shown crosshatched.

(All borders shown are open to question)



THE REVOLT IN KASTAMONU, c. 1291-1293

The history of the Turkish emirates of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries is still not well-understood. Our knowledge of the past contains a considerable number of gaps. A lot of eminent scholars were sufficiently expert to pay their primary attention to the early years of the Ottoman *beylik* or at least to the beginning of the Aegean emirates¹. However the scantiness of sources did not permit them to reach reliable results, though through no fault of their own². One might some little comfort in the fact that different

¹ To list but a few: M.F. Köprülü, *Les origines de l'Empire Ottoman*, [Études orientales publiées par l'Institut français d'archéologie de Stamboul, iii] (Paris, 1935); P. Wittek, *Das Fürstentum Mentesche: Studien zur Geschichte Westkleinasiens im 13-15 Jahrhundert* (Istanbul, 1934); *idem*, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire* (London, 1938); C. Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey. The Seljukid Sultanate of Rûm: Eleventh to Fourteenth Century* (London, 2001); C. Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: the Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1995); R.P. Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia* (Bloomington, 1983); C. Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1481* (Istanbul, 1990); B.A. Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade: Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Menteshe and Aydin* (Venice, 1983); O. Turan, *Selçuklular zamanında Türkiye. Siyâsi Tarih Alp Arslan'dan Osman Gazi'ye (1071-1318)* (Istanbul, 1971); E.A. Ζαχαριάδου, *Ἱστορία καὶ θρύλοι τῶν παλαιῶν σουλτάνων (1300-1400)* (Ἀθήνα, 1991); K.A. Zhukov, *Egejskie emirate v XIV-XV vv.* (Moscow, 1988). Cf also various entries in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, 11 vols., (Leiden, London, 1960-2002) (hereinafter - EI²) and *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 13 vols (Istanbul, 1940-1986) (hereafter - İA).

² For example, Wittek used Byzantine and Persian sources in order to study the history of the beylik of Menteşe. He also took into account the early Ottoman sources. Wittek was the first who tried to reconstruct the Turkish names in the "History" of Pachymeres (see the most recent study in question: M. Balivet, "Menteşe dit 'Sâglâm bey' et Germain alias 'Mârpûç': deux surnoms turcs dans la chronique byzantine de Georges Pachymère", *Turcica* 25 (1993), pp. 137-142). However, Wittek's work was severely criticised because he had "created a theory before having a data". Cf.: C. Heywood, "«Boundless Dreams of the Levant»: Paul Wittek, The George-Kreis, and the writing of Ottoman History",

sources (Arabic, Persian, Turkish/Ottoman and Byzantine) have almost no points of coincidence and such rare examples as do occur could be easily numbered.

The appearance of the Turkic emirates of Anatolia was accomplished only with great difficulty. The Turks were forced to struggle for their independence against the Mongols. The period 1260-1290 is marked by constant Turkic revolts against the *ilkhāns* and the last Seljuks of Rūm. Though the Mongols had drowned the bulk of the rebellions in blood, the *ilkhāns*' control over the western and southern lands of Rūm dwindled. These territories provided a firm base for the Turkic states, which were formally dependent on the *ilkhāns*' power for a time. The emirates had little international prestige: according to Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī who collected samples of Mamluk correspondence in the 15th century, the Turkic realms in Asia Minor were of far less importance than the states under the rule of the descendants of Chinggis Khān or the *maliks* of al-Maghrib or al-Andalus³.

The subject of the study is the history of such a revolt occurred in Kastamonu in 691-692 AH (24 December 1291 – 1 December 1293). It might be compared with other Turkish uprisings: the revolt of Mehmed-bey of Denizli in 1262⁴, the rebellion of Cimri in

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 1, (1989), pp. 32-50; *idem*, "A Subterranean History: Paul Wittek (1894-1978) and the Early Ottoman State", in *Die Welt des Islams* 36, Hft. 3 (1998), pp. 386-405; *idem*, "The Frontier in Ottoman History: Old Ideas and New Myths", in D. Power, N. Standen, eds., *Frontiers in Question. Eurasian Borderlands, 700-1700*, (London, 1999), pp. 228-250.

³ Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Qalqashandī, *Kitāb ṣubḥ al-a'shā fī ṣinā'at al-inshā*, 14 vols (Cairo, 1913-1919), viii, pp. 12-24.

⁴ Baybars al-Manṣūrī al-Dawādār, *Zubdat al-Fikra fī ta'rīkh al-Hijra. History of the early Mamluk Period*, ed. by D.S. Richards (Beirut, 1998), p. 76; Kerimüddin Mahmud Aksarayı, *Müsameret ül-ahbār. Mogollar zamanında Türkiye selçukluları tarihi. Mukaddime ve haşiyelerle tashih ve neşreden O. Turan* (Ankara, 1944), p. 71 (hereinafter – Aksarayı). Cf. C. Cahen, "Notes pour l'histoire des Turcomans d'Asie Mineure au XIII^e siècle", *Journal Asiatique* 239 (1951), pp. 336-338; *idem*, *The Formation of Turkey*, pp. 190-193; F.

1276-1279 supported by Karaman-, Eşref- and Mentешеoğulları⁵; with the insurrections of the Germiyanogulları in 1286-1289⁶ and last but not least with constant unrest of Turks in the later period.

It also should be added that the revolt in Kastamonu was the first Turkish revolt recorded by the Byzantines, in particular by George Pachymeres, the famous historian of the Palaiologan period, who was able to use unique sources concerned the Empire's oriental border in 1260-1308. There are also Persian sources, which describe the circumstances of the region at that time. The revolt reflected the formation of the Ottoman state; one finds clear evidence of it in the historical tales, which usually formed the nuclei of the earliest Ottoman records. One may assume from this brief description of the extant sources that the Kastamonian revolt marked a new stage of the general Turkish movement westward, coming dangerously near to the Byzantine frontier, whilst the previous rebellions of 1260-1270 were mostly concentrated around old Seljukid centres.

Sümer, "Anadoluda Moğollar", *Selçuklu Araştırmaları Dergisi* 1 (1970), pp. 48-49.

⁵ Aksarayi, pp. 110-113, 122-133; Ibn Bibi, *Tavarih-i al-i Saldjuk. Histoire des Seldjoudides d'Asie Mineure, d'après l'abrégé du Seldjouknameh d'Ibn Bibi. Texte persan, publié d'après le Ms. de Paris par M.Th. Houisma* [Recueil de textes relatifs à l'histoire des Seldjoudides, iv] (Leide, Brill, 1902), pp. 321-334 (hereinafter - Ibn Bibi); H. Duda, *Die Seltschukengeschichte des Ibn Bibi*, (Kopenhagen, 1959), p. 308-321 (hereinafter - Ibn Bibi (Duda)); *Histoire des Seldjoudides d'Asie Mineure par une anonyme*, ed. F.N.Uzluk (Ankara, 1952), pp. 59-62 (Persian text); pp. 38-41 (Turkish translation) (hereinafter - *Histoire des Seldjoudides*, 1952); Rashid al-Din, *Jāmi' al-tawārikh*, ed. by B. Karīmī, 2 vols (Tehran, 1959) ii, p. 770 (hereinafter - Rashid al-Din); Rashid al-Din, *Sbornik letopisei*, tr. A.K. Arends, L.A. Khetagurov, O.I. Smirnova and U.P. Verkhovsky, 3 vols (Moscow, Leningrad, 1946-1960) iii, p. 89 (hereinafter - Rashid al-Din (Arends)); Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, pp. 205-210; Turan, *Selçuklular zamanında Türkiye*, pp. 558-570.

⁶ *Histoire des Seldjoudides*, 1952, pp. 69-70, 72-73, 85-86 (Persian text); pp. 47-50, 60-61 (Turkish translation); Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, pp. 214-215, 220.

The history of Kastamonu in the twelfth century can be restored only with difficulty. Kastamonu, the former castle of the Komnenoi, was incorporated into the Seljuk lands in 1143⁷. The status of Kastamonu in the Sultanate of Rūm in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries is unknown, but there is some evidence to suggest that the town and the region around it were included into the state lands as an *iqṭā'* (formally a grant for military service, but it was common to give an *iqṭā'* to civil persons). In 1259 the *wazīr* Taj al-Dīn Mut'azz conducted negotiations with the sultan 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II (1246-1256; 1258-1261) about the revenues of Kastamonu which had to be paid to cover the state debt to the Mongols⁸. The debt was very large (which is why the sultan declined to pay it⁹), and this fact reveals that the *iqṭā'* of Kastamonu was the so-called "administrative" Seljuk *iqṭā'* which usually meant financial control, jurisdiction and a government over a province or a district¹⁰.

⁷ By this date, Kastamonu was a Danishmendid possession. The Seljuks must have conquered it when they annexed Ankara and Gangras after the death of Malik Muḥammad Danishmendid (1134-1142). Gregory the Priest, "Continuation", in Matthew of Edessa, *The Chronicle*, tr. A.E. Dostourian (Lanham, New York and London, 1993), p. 243; Michel le Syrien, *Chronique*, ed. and tr. J.B. Chabot, 4 vols (Paris, 1899-1910), iii, pp. 253-254 (French translation); iv, pp. 625-626 (Syriac text); F. Taeschner, "Ankara", *El' i*, p. 510. It is difficult to define when and how Kastamonu developed from a frontier fortress into the important centre of Rūm. Most likely, it happened by the end of the twelfth - beginning of thirteenth century, since the *waqf* of the *zāwiya* of the *shaykh* Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad in Göl Köy dates 603 AH (8 August 1206 - 27 July 1207). T.M. Yaman, *Kastamonu Tarihi* (Kastamonu, 1935), p. 85. The building of the *zāwiya* as well as the granting of the lands for it, thus implying the expectation of a steady income, seems to be very uncommon in the frontier zone with the constant danger of war.

⁸ Aksarayi, pp. 65-66.

⁹ *idem*, p. 66.

¹⁰ On the Seljukid "administrative" *iqṭā'*, so common in Syria, see: A.K.S. Lambton, "The internal structure of the Seljuq Empire, in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, 7 vols (Cambridge, 1968-1991) v, pp. 233-236; Taef Kamal el-Azhari, *The Saljūqs of Syria during the Crusaders*, 463-549 A.H./1070-1154

Moreover, we know several names of the governors of Kastamonu, who did not belong to the ruling dynasty of the Seljuks of Rûm. Therefore Kastamonu was not a manor of a *khāṣṣ* (the sultans' private estates), but was state land, the incomes of which were used for state needs. In 1259 there was such a need, when the Sultanate of Rûm had to pay its debts. It seems logical that the state debt must have been paid from state property.

The first known *beylerbeyi* of Kastamonu was the *amîr* Husām al-Dīn Çoban-bey. We read in Ibn Bībī that the *amîr* Çoban re-granted his possessions when the sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Kay-Qubād I (1220-1237) came to the throne in 616 AH (19 March 1219 - 8 March 1220)¹¹. Kastamonu was one of the possessions of *amîr* Çoban: he was the *bey* of the *uj* (boundary zone), of which Kastamonu was the centre. We find his descendants in Kastamonu in the latter part of the thirteenth century¹². Moreover, in 1221-1222, 1225 or 1227 *amîr* Çoban made his expedition into Crimea¹³,

A.D. (Berlin, 1997), p. 309; L.A. Semenova, *Iz istorii srednevekovoi Sirii. Sel'jukskii period* (Moscow, 1990), pp. 25-27.

¹¹ Ibn Bibi (Duda), p. 329, n 58. The date of the previous granting of possessions to the *amîr* Çoban is unknown.

¹² Ibn Bībī does not mention this fact. However, Yazıcıoğlu Ali writes that the *beylik* of Kastamonu was the possession of the descendants of the *amîr* Çoban: *Histoire des Seldjoudides d'Asie Mineure d'après Ibn-Bibi: texte turc*, ed. M.T.Houtsma [Recueil des textes relatifs à l'histoire des Seldjoudides, iii] (Leiden, 1902), p. 321. This statement of Yazıcıoğlu Ali is confirmed by Y. Yücel, who studied the votive inscriptions on the manuscripts dedicated to the descendants of the *amîr* Çoban. Y. Yücel, *XIII-XV yüzyıllar Kuzey-Batı Anadolu Tarihi. Çobanogulları, Candarogulları beylikleri* (Ankara, 1980), pp. 40-41.

¹³ Ibn Bibi, pp. 127-138; Ibn Bibi (Duda), pp. 130-139. There are several points of view on this date: the date 1221-1222 is put forward by A. Yakubovskii, "Rasskaz Ibn al-Bibi o pokhode maloaziiskikh turok na Sudak, polovtsev i russkikh v nachale XIII v.", *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 25 (1927), pp. 58-60; the date 1225 was suggested by C. Cahen, "Le commerce anatolien au debut du XIII^e siècle", in *ibidem*, *Turcobyzantina et Oriens Christianus* (London, 1974), XII, p. 95; *ibidem*, "Questions d'histoire de la province de Kastamonu au XIII^e siècle", in *ibidem*, *Turcobyzantina et Oriens Christianus*, X, p. 146; *ibidem*, *The Formation of Turkey*, pp. 54-55; O. Turan, "Anatolia in the period of the Seljuks

against the city of Soghdak/Sudak, and this fact lends additional support to the view that the *amīr* was the master of Kastamonu, since there he might have collected his troops and have moved to Sinop, to sail across the Black sea to the Crimea.

The end of the twelfth – beginning of the thirteenth century was a watershed in the history of Northern Anatolia: Gangras/Çankırı¹⁴ and Ankara were transformed from towns of the boundary zone into the important centres of the Sultanate. That is why Ankara is mentioned in the list of the chief cities of Rūm which the old Kılıç Arslān II (1156-1192) distributed among his sons¹⁵. During almost

and the beyliks", in *The Cambridge History of Islam*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1970), i, pp. 246-247; A. Savvides, *Byzantium in the Near East: It's relations with the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum in Asia Minor, the Armenians of Cilicia and the Mongols, A.D.1192-1237* (Thessaloniki, 1981), p. 172-174; M. Kuršanskis, "L'Empire de Trebizonde et les Turcs au 13-e siècle", *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* 46 (1988), pp. 117-118; the date 1227 was advanced by M. Houtsma, "Über eine türkische Chronik zur Geschichte der Selguken Klein Asiens", in *Actes de XVI Congrès international des orientalistes* (Leiden, 1885), ii, p. 381).

¹⁴ The Turkish name Çankırı appeared relatively recently, in the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. In Aqsarāyī (who writes in the 1320s) the name of the city (Kangarī, var. Kangharī) was derived from the Greek form Γάγγρα. Aksarayi, p. 28. By the end of the fourteenth century the Sivas chronicler Astarābādī had written the name of Gangras as 'Anqariyya where the first letter "ain" ['] corresponds to the Greek "gamma" [γ]. Aziz ibn Ardaşir Astarābādī, *Bazm ū Razm*, (Istanbul, 1928), p. 390; the name is not confused with Ankara since Astarābādī writes 'Ankara' as 'Ankuriyya'. Other cases of the transcription of "gamma" via "ain" [γ ⇔ ع] are known, cf. the family name Gavras/Gabras

(Γάβρας) as 'Afrās. 'Imād al-Dīn al-Isfahānī, *Conquête de la Syrie et de la Palestine par Salāh ed-dīn*, ed. C. de Landberg (Leiden, 1888) i, p. 451. This example shows that the Greek placenames were changed into the Turkish ones in the fifteenth century at the earliest.

¹⁵ 'Izz ad-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, 11 vols (Beyrut, 1998), x, pp. 219-220; Ibn-i Bībī, *El-Evāmīrū'l-'Alā'iyye fī'l-umūrī'l-'Alā'iyye*, neşredenler N. Lugal, A.S. Erzi (Ankara, 1957), p. 30 (the full version of Ibn Bībī); Ibn Bibi, p. 5; Ibn Bibi (Duda), p. 19; Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, p. 39.

the whole of the twelfth century Ankara and Gangras were "apanage" towns, ruled by the younger brothers of the sultans: by Malik Arab (by 1127)¹⁶, Shāhānshāh (1155-1174/75)¹⁷ and Mas'ūd (1192-1204)¹⁸. In the beginning of 1211 the brother of 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs I (1211-1219), the young *shāhzādah* 'Alā' al-Dīn Kay-Qubād rebelled against the sultan. The internal struggle lasted until the spring of 1214 when 'Alā' al-Dīn surrendered in Ankara¹⁹. 'Alā' al-Dīn tried to seize the throne, but after his failure he intended to establish in Ankara an independent principality of his own²⁰, restoring its status as in the twelfth century. 'Izz al-Dīn resolved the problem remarkably: he created a separate unit under the government of a military commander – *beylerbeyi* – and transferred the centre of the unit from Ankara or Gangras, now cities under direct sultanic control, to Kastamonu, the old castle of the Komnenoi²¹. Nobody knows when the reorganization took place, but the *terminus ad quem* must be 1214 when the sultan compelled his rebellious brother to surrender and conquered Sinop from Alexios I Great Komnenos (1204-1222). In theory, after 1214 only

¹⁶ Michel le Syrien, *Chronique*, iii, pp. 223-224 (French translation); iv, pp. 608-609 (Syriac text).

¹⁷ Gregory the Priest, "Continuation", p. 265; Ioannis Cinnami *epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, ed. A. Meineke (Bonn, 1836), p. 199, l.23 – p. 200, l.1; p. 291, ll.8-18; p. 295, ll.16-23; Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. I.A. van Dieten (Berlin, 1975), p. 123, ll.65-66; Ibn al-Athīr, ix, p. 477; Abū al-Fidā', *Tārīkh al-musammā al-Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar* 2 vols (Beirut, 1997), ii, p. 117.

¹⁸ Ibn al-Athīr, x, pp. 219-221, 292; Ibn Bibi, p. 5; Ibn Bibi (Duda), p. 19; Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, p. 39; Choniates, *Historia*, p. 474, l.69 – p. 475, l.25; p. 520, l.74 – p. 521, l.89.

¹⁹ Ibn Bibi, pp. 40-44, 47-50; Ibn Bibi (Duda), pp. 51-55, 58-61; Abū al-Fidā', ii, pp. 207-208. The chronology of 'Alā' al-Dīn's revolt has been established by Shukurov, *Velikie Komniny i Vostok* (St Petersburg, 2001), pp. 95-96.

²⁰ Ibn Bibi, p. 42.

²¹ That Kastamonu was a manor of the family of the Komnenoi, see: Nicéphore Bryennios, *Histoire*, Introduction, texte, trad. et notes par P. Gautier (Bruxelles, 1975), pp. 195-197.

the Nicaean Empire might have attacked Kastamonu from the northwestern side, but there is no evidence that the Empire tried to do so.

However, Kastamonu did not become a separate centre with the dynasty of the Çobanoğulları as its semi-dependent rulers. No facts about Kastamonu can be found in the records of the reign of Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kay-Khusraw II (1237-1246), the successor of Kay-Qubād I. What we can do is to suppose that during the reign of 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II (1246-1256; 1257-1260) the castle of Kastamonu was the possession of the *beylerbeyi* Shams al-Dīn Tavtaş/Tutaş (or Yavtaş/Yutaş)²². He was Cuman by origin²³ and certainly not the descendant of Ḥusām al-Dīn Çoban²⁴. After the death or serious injury of Tavtaş at the end of 1256, the revenues of Kastamonu might have been inherited by his successors in the title of *beylerbeyi*, but the *iqṭā'* of Kastamonu was granted to the *wazīr* Shams al-Dīn Baba Tughrā'ī. Unfortunately he died during winter of 1258-1259 without having viewed his new possession²⁵. In 1260, when 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II was finally defeated by his brother Rukn al-Dīn Kılıç Arslān IV and the Mongols, the *iqṭā'* of Kastamonu was re-granted to the *wazīr* Taj al-Dīn Mut'azz²⁶. After the death of Mut'azz (1277) his lands (including Kastamonu) were

²² Ibn Bibi, pp. 223, 259, 261, 270-271, 275, 280, 284, 286, 292; Ibn Bibi (Duda), pp. 214, 247, 249, 258-259, 262, 267, 270-271, 278: يوتاش / توتاش. Cf.

Aksarayi, pp. 36-37 and Baybars, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, pp. 47, 71-72: يوتاش. Cf.

also the form يوتاش in: *Histoire des Seldjoucides*, 1952, p. 51 (Persian text); p. 34 (Turkish translation).

²³ His name Yavtas has the Kıpçak (Cuman) form *yav-* instead of the Oğuz *yağ-*.

²⁴ According to Prof. Yücel, Ḥusām al-Dīn Çoban had a son by name Alp Yürek/Birek who ended his life as a *shahīd* ('martyr'). Yücel, *XIII-XV yüzyıllar Kuzey-Batı Anadolu Tarihi*, pp. 40-41.

²⁵ Aksarayi, pp. 62-63; Baybars, *Zubdat al-fikra*, p. 47.

²⁶ Aksarayi, p. 73; C.J. Heywood, "Kaşımünî", in *El²*, iv, p. 738.

inherited by his son Mujir al-Din Amirshah (d. 1302)²⁷. This does not mean that Mut'azz and his son were suzerains of Kastamonu. Formally the power belonged to the sultan, but at that time, in 1260-1277, the real governor of the Sultanate was the *parwana* Mu'in al-Din Süleimān. Most likely, he was the master of Kastamonu, since other cities and small towns eastward were controlled by him: Tokat²⁸, Sinop²⁹, Durağan³⁰, Merzifon³¹, Osmancık³² and probably Niksar³³, Samsun³⁴ and Amasya³⁵. There

²⁷ Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, pp. 247-248; *idem*, "Questions d'histoire de la province de Kastamonu au XIII siècle", p. 152; Heywood, "Kaṣṣāmūnī", p. 738.

²⁸ Ibn Bibi, p. 292; Ibn Bibi (Duda), pp. 277-278.

²⁹ The *parwana* conquered Sinop in 1265-1266 from the emperor Andronikos II Grand Komnenos (1263-1266) by the special permission of the *ilkhān* Hülegü (1254-1265), later confirmed by the *ilkhān* Abaqa (1265-1282). C. Cahen, "Quelques textes négligés concernant les Turcomans de Roum au moment de l'invasion mongole", *Byzantion* 14 (1939), pp. 137-138; Ibn Bibi, p. 299-300, Aksarayi, p. 83; Shukurov, *Velikie Komniny i Vostok*, pp. 165-167. According to Ibn Bibi, p. 300, after the conquest the *parwana* turned Sinop into his possession (though formally the lord of Sinop was the sultan). The *parwana* built a *madrasa* in Sinop. However, the *madrasa*'s inscription reads that this was made in 661 AH (15 November 1262 – 3 November 1263), and thus during the rule of the Empire of Trebizond over the city. D. Winfield and A.A.M. Bryer advanced another date for *madrasa*'s construction: 666 AH (22 September 1267 – 9 September 1268). A.A.M. Bryer, D. Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos* (Washington, 1985), i, p. 72. In addition, in 666 AH the *parwana* built a mosque in Sinop. M. Zeki Oral, "Duragan ve Bafra'da iki türbe", *Belleten* 20, Sayı 79 (1956), p. 387.

³⁰ There are the mosque, bath and caravanserai in Durağan, which were built by the *parwana* in 664 AH (13 October 1265 – 1 October 1266). Zeki Oral, "Duragan ve Bafra'da iki türbe", loc.cit.

³¹ In 663 AH (24 October 1264 – 12 October 1265) the *parwana* ordered the erection of a mosque in Merzifon. Zeki Oral, loc.cit.

³² According to Aksarayi, in 1271 Mu'in al-Din Süleimān and his retainers dealt with their rival, the *wazir* Fakhr al-Din 'Alī. They accused the *wazir* in maintaining contacts with the exiled ex-sultan 'Izz al-Din Kay-Kāwūs II, who lived in the Crimea. The *wazir* was deposed and then imprisoned in Osmancık, under the control of the *parwana*. Aksarayi, pp. 92-93.

is an inscription of 'Alī-bey, one of the sons of the *parwāna*, placed on the doors of a house in Kastamonu³⁶, and I suggest that Kastamonu was also under the *parwāna*'s control. The type of this control was different from that of Mut'azz: the *parwāna* had political supremacy whilst Mut'azz only received a grant from the sultan to use tax income.

The *parwāna* was executed for treason by the Mongols on 1 Rabī' I 676 AH (2 August 1277)³⁷. His son Mu'īn al-Dīn Mehmed-bey took possession of Sinope, where he ruled until 696 AH (30 October 1296 – 18 October 1297). His power over Kastamonu lasted longer, until 698 AH (9 October 1298 – 27 September 1299), but we know that he visited Kastamonu only twice, in 696 AH and 698 AH³⁸.

³³ It was in Niksar where the *parwāna* collected his army before the siege of Sinop. Aksarayi, pp. 82-83.

³⁴ It should be noted that Sinop was attacked from the sea in 1265, therefore, the *parwāna* must have had a large fleet. The only naval port which the Seljuks might have possessed was that of Samsun. Cahen, "Quelques textes", p. 138.

³⁵ It was Amasya where the descendants of the *parwāna* lived during the fourteenth century. We also find a son of the sultan Mas'ūd II, Tāj al-Dīn Altunbaş, as a ruler of Amasya before the 1340s: Mükrimin Halil Yınanç, "Amasya", *İA* i, p. 394; Zeki Oral, "Duragan ve Bafra'da iki türbe", pp. 386-387.

³⁶ Yaman, *Kastamonu Tarihi*, p. 86; cf. also Aksarayi, p. 93.

³⁷ Ibn Bibi, pp. 318-321; Ibn Bibi (Duda), pp. 305-308; Aksarayi, pp. 116-118; Rashīd al-Dīn, ii, p. 768-770; Rashīd al-Dīn, (Arends), iii, pp. 88-89; Gregorios Bar 'Ebrāyā (Gregorius Barhebraeus), *Kitāb al-makbānāt zabnā: Gregorii Barhebraei chronicon syriacum: e codd. mss. emendatum ac punctis vocalibus adnotationibusque locupletatum*, [ed. P. Bedjan] (Paris, 1890), p. 537; Gregory Abū'l Faraj, commonly known as Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography*, ed. and tr. E.W. Budge, 2 vols (London, 1931), i, pp. 458; Baybars, *Zubdat al-fikra*, pp. 158-159; *Histoire des Seldjucides*, 1952, pp. 58-59 (Persian text); pp. 37-38 (Turkish translation); *İstanbul'un fethinden önce yazılmış Tarihî Takvimler*, ed. O. Turan (Ankara, 1954), pp. 78-79; Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, pp. 206-207; Turan, *Selçuklular zamanında Türkiye*, pp. 549-557.

³⁸ Aksarayi, pp. 193, 217-18, 247-250; Müneccim-başı, *Şaḥā'if al-akhbār*, 3 vols (İstanbul, 1285 AH), iii, p. 31; B. Darkot, "Sinop", *İA* x, p. 685.

In the 1290s the province of Kastamonu, the remote mountainous land under the nominal control of the central power, became the epicentre of the dangerous Turkmen revolt. The scope of the revolt was so large that it was remembered not only by the Seljukid chroniclers, but also by their Byzantine contemporaries, Pachymeres and Gregoras. Unfortunately, our sources hardly correspond to each other, despite the fact that they are narrating the same event, which took place between 1291 and 1293. I will begin with the evidence of the Seljukid historians.

Aqsarāyī writes that in 691 AH (24 December 1291 – 11 December 1292) the *malik* Rukn al-Dīn Kılıç Arslān revolted against his brother, the sultan Mas'ūd II. Rukn al-Dīn went to Kastamonu, where the Turks supported him. However, he managed to establish his power only when he had broken down resistance. For example, the *sipāhdār* of Kastamonu Muẓaffar al-Dīn [ibn] Alp Yürek³⁹, who acted against the *malik*, was killed. The Turkish tribes started their uprising in the province, and the *ilkhān* Geikhatu ordered the sultan Mas'ūd II to subdue the rebels. The sultan obediently launched a campaign against his brother. He was accompanied by Mujīr al-Dīn Amīr-shāh, the *ṣāhib* Najm al-Dīn and the heads of the 'Tājīk' detachments⁴⁰. Geikhatu sent three

³⁹ Aqsarāyī misunderstood the names of the son and the father. According to Ibn Bibi and the inscriptions, a certain Alp Yürek was father of Muẓaffar al-Dīn Yavlak Arslan. The full name of Alp Yürek is unknown. According to Ibn Bibī, in 1280 the *sipāhdār* of Kastamonu was Muẓaffar al-Dīn Yavlak Arslan; he obviously must have performed the same office in 1291. Thus, "Muẓaffar al-Dīn Alp Yürek" in Aqsarāyī should be read as "Muẓaffar al-Dīn [Yavlak Arslan ibn] Alp Yürek". Ibn Bibi, p. 337; Ibn Bibi (Duda), p. 325; Yücel, *XIII-XV yüzyıllar Kuzey-Batı Anadolu Tarihi*, pp. 40-41; Turan, *Selcuklular zamanında Türkiye*, p. 612, n. 11.

⁴⁰ 'Tājīk' was the name for the sedentary population in the Sultanate of Rūm. Many of the 'Tājīks' in Asia Minor, if not a majority, were Persian-speaking though the same name could have been applied to the Turkish-speaking townfolk. Cf. Rashid ad-Dīn's reply to the letter of the nobles of Kayseri, in which he mentions "the group of the Tājīk (i.e. the dwellers of Kayseri), who are disobedient to us and who are offending us by their animosity". *Mukātabāt-i*

thousand Mongol horsemen to support Mas'ūd's army, which was much smaller than the enemy's. In the mountain pass near Kastamonu⁴¹ the Tājīk-Mongol army suffered an unexpected attack by the Turks. The sultan's detachment was defeated and he himself was captured and sent to Kastamonu. Göktay, the head of the vanguard, decided to turn back, and only the Mongol commander Giray with the rest of the army was left to launch an attack against the Turks. He finally managed to overcome the enemy and to liberate the sultan. The army then returned to Osmancık⁴².

The anonymous Persian chronicle describes the final stage of the revolt. A certain *malik shāhzādah*, the sultan's brother, also rebelled against the sultan. The chief centre of the revolt was in Kastamonu and Būrghulū (Safranbolu), near the Byzantine border. The sultan together with Tashtemūr, the proxy of the *İlkhan* Geikhatu, and a *mustawfī* decided to put an end to the revolt. The *mustawfī* managed to subdue Būrghulū by bribery and to capture the *malik*. The chronicle has the date: the uprising started after 11 Rajab 691 AH (28 June 1292)⁴³ and was put down by Thursday, 5

Rashīdī, ed. Muhammad Shafī' (Lahore, 1945), p. 142; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Perepiska*, transl. A.I. Falina (Moscow, 1971), p. 195. Cf. A.H. Morton, "The Letters of Rashīd al-Dīn: İlkhānīd Fact or Timurid Fiction", in Amitai-Preiss, Morgan, eds., *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy*, pp. 155-199, who suggests that the letters of Rashīd al-Dīn, the author of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, were forged during the Timurid time. If so, the term 'Tājīk' in its specific meaning of the sedentary population in Anatolia was still in use in the beginning of the 15th century.

⁴¹ Talat Mümtaz Yaman suggests that it was the pass Derekli. Yaman, *Kastamonu Tarihi*, p. 83, n. 2.

⁴² Aksarayi, p. 170-179. Cf. H. Inalcik, "The emergence of the Ottoman frontier principality", in *The Cambridge History of Islam* 2 vols (Cambridge, 1970), i, pp. 266-267; Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, p. 221; E.A. Zachariadou, "Pachymeres on the 'Amourioi' of Kastamonu", in *eadem*, *Romania and the Turks (c. 1300-1500)* (London, 1985), N II, pp. 67-68; Yücel, *XIII-XV yüzyıllar Kuzey-Batı Anadolu Tarihi*, pp. 46-47.

⁴³ After the capture of Qal'at al-Rūm by the Mamluks; on this date, see: Abū al-Fidā', ii, pp. 362-363; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fi funūn al-adab*, 31 vols

Jumādā I or Jumādā II (*māh-i tawba*) 693 AH (April-May 1294)⁴⁴. It seems that the Persian chronicle narrates the last stage of the revolt, which ended in the capture of the *malik*, whilst Aqsarāyī writes about the beginning of the uprising, which started with the death of Muẓaffar al-Dīn [ibn] Alp Yürek, and goes on to the expedition of the Tājik-Mongol army to Kastamonu and the battle with the rebels in the pass of Derekli, somewhere between Osmancık and Gümüşhacıköy.

Now let me focus on the account of Pachymeres.

According to Pachymeres, a certain Melik Masour (Μελήκ Μασούρ) was the son of the sultan Azatines (Ἀζατίνης, the sultan 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II). After his father's death in the Crimea the Melik crossed the Black Sea and sailed to Thymaine, on the shore of Asia Minor⁴⁵. He then went to Kastamonu⁴⁶. The *ilkhān* Arghun (Ἀργάνης) granted to the Melik power over the former lands of his father Azatines. However, the local lord Amourios (Ἀμούριος), the father of Ali (Ἀλῆς) and Nastratios (Ναστράτιος), opposed this decision. The resistance of Amourios forced the Melik to seek Byzantine help. When the Melik arrived at Constantinople (via Herakleia Pontike⁴⁷), he was informed that the emperor Andronikos II had gone to Nymphaeum. The Melik followed the emperor's road, but as soon as he realised that a

(Cairo, 1923-1991), xxxi, p. 226; Rashīd al-Dīn, ii, pp. 833-834; Rashīd al-Dīn (Arends), iii, pp. 133-134; P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusaders. The Near East from the eleventh century to 1517* (London, New York, 1986), p. 105.

⁴⁴ *Histoire des Seldjoudides*, 1952, pp. 90-91 (Persian text); pp. 64-65. The date in the chronicle contains a mistake: neither 5 Jumādā I nor 5 Jumādā II 693 AH fell on Thursday.

⁴⁵ Thymaine (Θυμαίνη) was located 16 km. north-east of Cide. K. Belke, *Paphlagonien und Honorias* [Tabula Imperii Byzantini, 9] (Wien, 1996), pp. 274-275.

⁴⁶ Cf Georges Pachymérès, *Relations historiques*, ed. A. Failler, 5 vols. (Paris, 1984-2000), ii, p. 673, ll. 23-24 (hereafter – Pachymeres).

⁴⁷ Pachymeres, ii, p. 673, ll. 26-28.

meeting would be unprofitable, he returned to the "Persians". In Rūm (the context reveals "in Kastamonu") he managed to become so powerful that Amourios was forced to ask the Melik to make peace. When Amourios arrived at the Melik's court, the latter ordered that he and his children be cut to pieces. Only Ali, the son of Amourios, was saved. In revenge, Ali waged guerrilla warfare against the Melik. The Melik was forced to launch a campaign against Ali, but was slain in battle. This raised Ali to the dignity of *amīr* (εἰς ὄγκον Ἀμουρίου)⁴⁸, and he soon showed his hostility to the Byzantines. The Empire managed to resist the first incursion of Ali, and even to sign a peace treaty with him. Unfortunately, the flooding of the river Sangarios (March 1302) left eastern Bithynia unprotected, despite the wooden wall of Michael VIII, and the troops of Ali entered Byzantine territory. A considerable number of the troops joined those of the *amīr* Osman near Nikomedeia. Pachymeres then describes the battle at Bapheus, where the Ottomans defeated the Byzantines⁴⁹.

Nikephoros Gregoras repeats the information in Pachymeres. His account differs from Pachymeres' only in one point: the Melik did not die in battle, but was secretly killed by his enemies⁵⁰.

As I have mentioned, the chief point is that the information in Pachymeres hardly corresponds to that in Aqsarāyī and the chronicle of the anonymous Persian author. However, the beginning of the account of Pachymeres, concerning the arrival of the Melik

⁴⁸ Moravcsik, Mordtmann and Failler believe that "Amourios" transliterates the name 'Umar/'Omar. Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* 2 vols (Berlin, 1958), ii, p. 216; J. Mordtmann, "İsfendiyar oğlu", in *El*², iv, pp. 103-109; A. Failler, "Les émirs turcs à la conquête de l'Anatolie au début du 14^e siècle", *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* 52 (1994), pp. 96-104. Zachariadou and Cahen transliterate "Amourios" as the title "amīr". Zachariadou, "Pachymeres on the 'Amouriōi' of Kastamonu", pp. 63-65; Cahen, "Questions d'histoire de la province de Kastamonu", p. 157.

⁴⁹ Pachymeres, ii, p. 359, l. 4 - p. 365, l. 12.

⁵⁰ Nicephorus Gregoras, *Historia Byzantina*, ed. L. Schopen and I. Bekker, 3 vols. (Bonn, 1829-1855), i, p. 137, ll. 4-22 (hereinafter - Gregoras).

Masour in Anatolia, nicely fits the information in Ibn Bībī, who described the arrival of Ghiyāth al-Dīn Mas'ūd, the son of 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II. Mas'ūd himself was sultan in 1284-1298 and 1303-1305.

The first statement in Pachymeres' story which mentions the death of the sultan 'Azatines' in the Crimea, relates the sultan 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II. As we have seen, Kay-Kāwūs II was forced to leave his realm for Nicaea in 1260, but his friend Michael VIII Palaiologos did not intend to help his former ally. The emperor now maintained close contacts with the first *Ilkhān* who had ordered the sultan to be expelled from Rūm⁵¹. When he realised this bitter reality⁵², 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II stirred up a revolt in 1264⁵³. The uprising seemed likely soon to be put down but Berke, the Khān of the Golden Horde, decided to help 'Izz al-Dīn. Liberated by the Golden Horde attack against the Byzantine Balkan lands, 'Izz al-Dīn left the fortress of Ainos, where he was imprisoned, for the city of Solkhat in the Crimea which was granted to him by Berke (by 1265 or indeed in the autumn-winter 1264)⁵⁴. This was the most serious conflict between Michael Palaiologos and the Golden Horde⁵⁵.

⁵¹ Michael VIII's daughter Maria married the Ilkhan Abaqa in 1265. A.A.M. Bryer, "The Fate of George Komnenos, Ruler of Trebizond (1266-1280)", in *idem*, *The Empire of Trebizond and the Pontos* (London, 1980), N IV, p. 341.

⁵² Pachymeres, i, p. 301, ll. 15-16.

⁵³ Aksarayi, pp. 75-77.

⁵⁴ Ibn Bibi, pp. 298, 335; Ibn Bibi (Duda), pp. 285, 323 (e); Pachymeres, i, pp. 300-313; Gregoras, i, pp. 99-101; W. de Tiesenhhausen, *Recueil de matériaux relatifs à l'histoire de l'Horde d'Or*, 2 vols (Sankt-Peterburg, 1884, 1941), i: *Extraits des ouvrages arabes*, pp. 52-54, 178-180, 200 (pp. 62-63, 189-192, 203 of the Russian translation).

⁵⁵ The conflict was also caused by another action of Michael VIII who within one year (August 1263 – August 1264) detained the Egyptian embassy, which was sent to the Golden Horde, in Constantinople. The Mamluk sources inform that Michael did so because of the attack of Berke against the Empire. The sultan Baybars settled the conflict between the emperor and the Khān. Tiesenhhausen, *Recueil*, i, pp. 52-53, 124-125 (pp. 62, 126 Russian translation); Zakirov,

According to Ibn Bibī, the ex-sultan Kay-Kāwūs II died in the town of Sūlkhād (var. Sūlkhāt, modern Solkhat in the Crimea) in 679 AH (3 May 1280 – 21 April 1281). His two sons, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Mas'ūd and Rukn al-Dīn Kayūmarth were at his deathbed. In his will 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II ordered Mas'ūd, his heir, to sail to Asia Minor and claim the Seljukid throne. However, the *shāhzādah* Kayūmarth, Mas'ūd's younger brother, acted more quickly. He landed on the south shore of the Black Sea before Mas'ūd. The *nā'ib* of Kastamonu captured him in the territory of the *uj* of Amasya. Kayūmarth was imprisoned in Kastamonu. Then Mas'ūd arrived in Sinop. He was greeted by the *sipāhdār*⁵⁶ of Kastamonu *amīr* Muẓaffar al-Dīn Yavlak Arslān ibn Alp Yürek. Yavlak Arslān was grandson the *amīr* Husām al-Dīn Çoban-bey⁵⁷. Yavlak Arslan delivered Kayūmarth to Mas'ūd who refused to pardon his rebel brother (this suggests that Kayūmarth remained in chains in Kastamonu). Then Mas'ūd visited the court of the *ilkhān* Abaqa. As a result, Mas'ūd received Āmid, Harput, Malatya and Sivas⁵⁸.

Thus, the account of Pachymeres covers the period between 1280, the date of the arrival of the *maliks* Ghiyāth al-Dīn Mas'ūd and Rukn al-Dīn Kayūmarth, and 1302, the date of the battle at Bapheus. We also know that the emperor's sojourn in Nymphaion dates from 1290/1291 to 28 June 1293⁵⁹. The visit of the Melik

Diplomaticheskie otnosheniia Zolotoi Ordı s Egiptom (Moscow, 1966), pp. 52-53.

⁵⁶ "Sipāhdār" was a military commander in a province or a city. Cf another variant of Ibn Bibi, in which Yavlak Arslan is called "bey". Ibn Bibi (Duda), p. 324 (d).

⁵⁷ Yücel, *XIII-XV yüzyıllar Kuzey-Batı Anadolu Tarihi*, pp. 40-47.

⁵⁸ Ibn Bibi, pp. 334-337; Ibn Bibi (Duda), pp. 322-326.

⁵⁹ Pachymeres, ii, p. 171, ll.1-25; p. 183, ll.15-18; A.E. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins: The Foreign Policy of Andronicus II, 1281-1328* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), pp. 76-79; A. Failler, "Chronologie et composition dans l'Histoire de Georges Pachymère", part 3: *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* 48 (1990), pp. 15-28.

Masour to Byzantium took place at the time of the great revolt in Kastamonu (1291-1293).

I suggest that Rukn al-Dīn Kayūmarth in Ibn Bībī and Rukn al-Dīn Kılıç Arslān in Aqсарāyī were one and the same person. In particular, Aqсарāyī may have made a mistake in names, as he did in regard to Muzaffar al-Dīn Yavlak Arslān⁶⁰. How then can we transliterate the name "Masour" in Pachymeres? Two manuscripts of his *History* read the name as $\mu\alpha\nu\sigma\omicron\upsilon\rho$ which was an accurate reproduction of the Arabic title *manşūr* ('victorious')⁶¹. As I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr stressed, *manşūr* was not a name but a title; the title *al-malik al-manşūr* was a standard inscription on the Seljukid coins. Thus, the "Melik Masour" may have been the *malik* Rukn al-Dīn Kılıç Arslān, the head of the revolt in Kastamonu⁶². His animosity towards Muzaffar al-Dīn Yavlak Arslān started in 1280, and ended in the brutal death of the latter in 1291 during the revolt in Kastamonu.

As to "Amourios" and his sons "Nastratios"⁶³ and Ali, the bitter enemy of the Melik, it was suggested that they are representatives

⁶⁰ See note 39 above.

⁶¹ Pachymeres, ii, p. 359, l.14 (68); Zachariadou, "Pachymeres on the 'Amourioi' of Kastamonu", pp. 65-68; Failler, "Les émirs turcs à la conquête de l'Anatolie", pp. 95-96.

⁶² I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr, "Pachymère et les sources orientales", *Turcica* 32 (2000), p. 427.

⁶³ There have been various attempts to decipher the name. Zachariadou ("Pachymeres on the 'Amourioi' of Kastamonu", p. 57) suggests that "Nastratios" is the name "Naşir al-Dīn" (نصير الدين). Cahen ("Questions d'histoire de la province de Kastamonu", p. 154) doubts if this person was Hüsām al-Dīn Çobanoğlu, to whom Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī devoted his famous *Encyclopaedia*. In the chronicle of Pseudo-Sphrantzes (16th century), one can find other names of Amourios' sons: Haşan (Χασάν) and Muḥammad (Μαχμούμ). Georgios Sphrantzes, *Memorii 1401-1477. In anexă: Pseudo-Phrantzes. Macarie Melissenos Cronica (1258-1481)*, ed. critica de V. Grecu (Bucureşti, 1966), [Scriptores byzantini, 5], p. 216, ll.30-31.

??! of the dynasty Çobanoğulları in Paphlagonia⁶⁴. In particular, the sipāhdār of Kastamonu Muẓaffar al-Dīn Yavlak Arslān, who was killed by the rebellious malik, was a Çobanoğlu. If so, the account of Pachymeres and Aqsarāyī fully coincide as far as the death of Yavlak Arslān (Amourios) is concerned. Yavlak Arslān's son, the *mustawfī* Nāṣir al-Dīn ibn Yavlak Arslan appears on the pages of the Persian chronicle as an important member of the Seljukid government in Konya⁶⁵. He might have been the "Nastratios" of Pachymeres: the name "Nāṣir al-Dīn" (ناصر الدين) was misread as

ناصر الدين "Nāṣir al-Dīn" where two dots were added above: a common mistake in manuscripts. Thus, the full form of this name should have been Ναστρατί(ν)ος; the letter ν being lost while re-writing the text, like in the "Masour". If so, this means that Pachymeres used a translation from a text which originally was written in Arabic characters.

However, one might suppose "Amourios" and his sons were Çobanoğulları if one can show that "Amourios" should be translated as the title "amīr". Such a translation is possible for we know the cases in which the vowel [i] in the Turkish or Arabic and Persian words was reproduced in Greek with help of the diphthong [ou]. For example, Pachymeres writes the name of the founder of the dynasty Germiyanogulları as 'Αλυσούρας (Byzantine reading:

⁶⁴ Inalcik, "The emergence of the Ottoman frontier principality", pp. 266-268; Zachariadou, "Pachymeres on the 'Amourioi' of Kastamonu", pp. 65-67; Cahen, "Questions d'histoire de la province de Kastamonu", pp. 155-157; Yücel, *XIII-XV yüzyıllar Kuzey-Batı Anadolu Tarihi*, pp. 47-49. Cf. Failler, "Les émirs turcs à la conquête de l'Anatolie", pp. 96-104, who believes that as "Amourios" is a name, but not the title "amīr", this person cannot be identified with the dynasty of Çobanoğulları.

⁶⁵ *Histoire des Seldjoucides*, 1952, pp. 77-83 (Persian text); pp. 54-58. On him, see: Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, pp. 218-222.

[Alisiras]]⁶⁶, from the name 'Alīshīr (Alişir), whilst Gregoras, who reproduces the text in Pachymeres, changed this name into 'Αλίσούριος⁶⁷. The source of Pachymeres might have had something like εἰς ὄγκον ἀμύριον [or ἀμύραν], for the form ἀμυρ(ᾶς) can be found in other Byzantine loan words: 'Αμυρούτζης⁶⁸, 'Αμυρτζάινα⁶⁹, ἀμυραχούρης⁷⁰, 'Αμυριάλης⁷¹; one could also find a form ἀμυρᾶς⁷².

How should one translate this awkward construction 'Αλῆς 'Αμούριος?⁷³ As "'Alī, the son of the *amīr*"? But in this case the Greek text should have had a clearer construction: 'Αλῆς 'Αμούριου or 'Αλῆς τοῦ 'Αμούριου. "The *amīr* 'Alī"? Why should the title *amīr* be placed *after* the name? I suggest that in the construction 'Αλῆς 'Αμούριος we are faced with the name of a *dynasty*. Cf. the following examples: Μουράτμπεη 'Ατμάνε (Voc.), Μουράτμπεη 'Ατουμάνη (Voc. et Gen.), Παγιαζήτου

⁶⁶ Pachymeres, ii, p. 425, l.7; p. 463, l.14; p. 469, ll.18, 28; p. 471, l.9; p. 479, l.1; Moravcsik *Byzantinoturcica*, ii, pp. 62-63.

⁶⁷ Gregoras, i, p. 214, l.15.

⁶⁸ R.M. Shukurov, "Tiurki na pravoslavnom Ponte v XIII-XV vv.: nachal'nyi etap tiurkizatsii?", in S.P. Karpov, ed., *Prichernomor'e v Srednie veka 2* (1995), p. 75, n 1; *idem*, "The Byzantine Turks of the Pontos", *Mésogelos* 6 (1999), p. 11, n 1.

⁶⁹ Shukurov, "Tiurki na pravoslavnom Ponte", p. 75, n 2; *idem*, "The Byzantine Turks of the Pontos", pp. 11-12, n 2.

⁷⁰ Akropolites, i, p. 138, l.2; Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, ii, p. 68.

⁷¹ O. Lampsides, ed., *Μιχαήλ τοῦ Παναρέτου περὶ τῶν Μεγάλων Κομνηνῶν* (Athens, 1958), p. 81, l.17; Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, ii, p. 68; Shukurov, "Tiurki na pravoslavnom Ponte", p. 75, n 1; *idem*, "The Byzantine Turks of the Pontos", p. 11, n 1.

⁷² Bryennios, ed. Gautier, p. 187, l.26; p. 189, l.7; p. 191, l.4; Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, ii, p. 67.

⁷³ Pachymeres, ii, p. 365, l.7.

Ἀτουμάνου (Gen.), Ὁτουμάνεω Ἀμουράτεω (Gen.)⁷⁴. The cases of the ancestor and the descendant are the same⁷⁵.

Thus, the text of Pachymeres, which contains no dates, describes three different events: (1) the arrival of Rukn al-Dīn Kayūmarth in Anatolia in 1280, (2) his revolt in Kastamonu in 1291-1293 when he killed his rival Muẓaffar al-Dīn Yavlak Arslān and (3) the incursion of the Çobanoğulları Turks into Byzantine territory near Nikomedeia in March 1302. So the text of Pachymeres, presumably in Arabic script, which relates the events (1) and (2), recounts about the first phase of the revolt in Kastamonu, which was described – though with some uncertainty – by Aqṣarāyī. I suggest that Pachymeres had at his disposal a description of the revolt, as reveal his way of writing the proper names: Nastratios, Masour, Ἀλῆ⁷⁶.

⁷⁴ Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, ii, p. 215, lemma Ὁθμόνος, 3.

⁷⁵ A. Failler opposes the hypothesis of Zachariadou and Cahen, according to which "Amourios" was the title *amīr*. In Failler's opinion, the construction Ἀλῆν... Ἀμούριον is a special rhetorical formula "hyperbate", with which "ce nom constitue précisément le seul proparoxyton de la phrase". However, Failler's main objection is based on phonetics: according to him, there are no transliterations of the title *amīr* as ἀμούρης in the Byzantine texts. He ignores the cases when the Turkish sound [i] was reproduced in the Greek texts as ου. I see no sense in Failler's translation of the statement "ταῦτα τὸν Ἀλῆν ἐπῆρεν εἰς ὄγκον Ἀμούριον" as "Ces faites excitèrent Halès Amourios à l'orgueil". He himself cites many examples where ὁ ὄγκος should be translated as "dignity". Failler, "Les émirs turcs à la conquête de l'Anatolie", pp. 101-103.

⁷⁶ In the writing of the name Ἀλῆ we find the sign of rough breathing (') in Ἀλῆς, which was unnecessary during the Byzantine time, since the rough breathing did not need to be pronounced. However, an experienced translator who knew Old Greek might have been trying to mark the letter "ain", ε ['] in

على with the help of the rough breathing sign. The reading Ἀλῆς (with the rough breathing) was accepted as basic by Failler in his critical edition of Pachymeres. Failler, "Les émirs turcs à la conquête de l'Anatolie", p. 82, note 37. That the rough breathing as an equivalent for the "ain" was invented not by Pachymeres but by his predecessor is seen from the fact that usually Pachymeres

The original source might have been composed in Arabic, Persian or Seljuk Turkish (all these languages use Arabic alphabet). Both sources have the common point – they depict the quarrel between the *malik* (Rukn al-Dīn Kayūmarth) and the *sipahdār* of Kastamonu Muzaffar al-Dīn Yavlak Arslān. Pachymeres goes into some important details.

The campaign of the sultan Mas'ūd against his brother Rukn al-Dīn, which Aqsarāyī narrates, was only the second in sequence. The first was the war between Yavlak Arslān, who was supported by the Mongols⁷⁷, and the *malik* Rukn al-Dīn. Only Pachymeres describes how the struggle ended: Yavlak Arslān forced the *malik* to seek refuge in the Byzantine territory. This first war occurred

does not mark the "ain" this way in another cases. He simply places the letter α) with smooth breathing instead of "ain", cf. 'Αζατίνης [Pachymeres, ii, p. 359, l.13; p. 671, ll.21,27; p. 673, ll.1,6, from 'Izz al-Dīn, عز الدين], 'Ατμόνυ [Pachymeres, ii, p. 347, l.14; p. 359, l.5; p. 365, ll.9,13,27; p. 367, l.3; p. 425, l.7; p. 457, l.10; p. 701, ll.19,21,26; p. 707, l.7, from 'Uthmān, عثمان], but cf.

Pachymeres, ii, p. 469, ll.18, 28: 'Αλίσύρας, from 'Alīshīr. Indeed, one might point out the presence of the form 'Αζατίνης in the text in question. However, this can be explained by that Pachymeres mentions the sultan 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II for the first time much earlier, in the first volume of his work, dedicated to the reign of Michael VIII, for which he evidently uses sources different from those about the revolt in Kastamonu. Pachymeres, i, p. 181, l.20; p. 235, l.6; p. 301, ll.10,11; p. 307, l.19. Later, while composing his second volume about the reign of Andronikos II, Pachymeres simply reproduced the form 'Αζατίνης for 'Izz al-Dīn, which he had got used to write in the first volume. The only objection to my theory is that I do not know similar cases where the "ain" was trasliterated into Greek as the rough breathing. Note 14 in the present study shows that the Arabs and Persians assotiated the Greek letter gamma [γ] with the "ain". However, the Greeks might have preferred other ways. Cf. N.I. Serikov, "«Saratsinskii Lexicon»: «ΦΑΚΥΝΟΝ» and «ΓΗΖΟΙ ΕΑΑΙΟΥ»", *Vizantiiskiy Vremennik* 58, (1999), p. 92.

⁷⁷ Cf. Ibn Bibi's statement that Yavlak Arslan was in favour in Tabriz.

between 1284⁷⁸ and 1290 (before the journey of the emperor Andronikos II to Nymphaion). This raises the question: why did the *malik* Rukn al-Dīn prefer to make his way to Byzantium, and not to the Crimea or the western Black Sea shore, the lands of the Golden Horde? If he was so hostile to the *ilkhān*, his most natural ally must have been the Khān of the Golden Horde, Toqta, who in 1288 and 1290 (thus at the time very close to the *malik*'s seeking refuge) attacked Irān⁷⁹. It is also well known that just before the events in question, in 1287 the *ilkhān* Arghun (1284-1291) sent the embassy of the Nestorian monk *rabbān* Šāwmā by way of Constantinople. The mission of the *rabbān* Šāwmā aimed at creating a military alliance between the Īlkhānid state and the West, first of all with the Papacy and the king of France⁸⁰. However, there is no evidence that the *ilkhān* asked Byzantium for military aid: in the *History of Mār Yahbhallāhā III and Rabbān Šāwmā* the meeting between the emperor and the embassy is described only as the ceremonial reception of the *rabbān* in the Imperial palace⁸¹. Indeed, Byzantium

⁷⁸ Pachymeres writes that the *ilkhān* Arghun granted to the "Melik Masour" the former lands of the sultan 'Izz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II in Kastamonu. The reign of Arghun began in 1284; thus, this date is a *terminus a quo* when the "Melik" received possessions in Kastamonu.

⁷⁹ Tiesenhausen, *Recueil*, i, pp. 67/69. The exchange of the embassies between Egypt and the Golden Horde began from 1282. It was a military alliance against the Īlkhānid state. *idem*, pp. 65-67/67-69; 81-82/103-104; J.A. Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Īl-Khāns", in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, v, p. 370.

⁸⁰ The negotiations between the *ilkhān* and the Pope Honorius IV (1285-1287) started even earlier, in 1285. A.C. Moule, *Christianus in China before the year 1550* (London, 1930), p. 106; Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Īl-Khāns", pp. 370-371.

⁸¹ *Histoire de Mar-Jabalaha, de trois autres patriarches, d'un prêtre et de deux laïques nestoriens*, ed. P. Bedjan (Paris, Leipzig, 1895), pp. 48-53; *The Monks of Kāblāi Khān, Emperor of China or the History of the Life and Travels of Rabbān Šāwmā, Envoy and Plenipotentiary of the Mongol Khāns to the Kings of Europe, and Markōs who as Mār Yahbhallāhā became Patriarch of the Nestorian Church in Asia. Translated from the Syriac by Sir E.A. Wallis Budge* (London, 1928), pp. 167-170. Indeed, the *rabbān* Šāwmā returned to Irān with the letters of only three

still had her army, which collapsed later, in 1295, when Alexios Philanthropenos, the defender of the Meander valleys, revolted against the emperor⁸². However, in 1290-1291 Byzantium was quite able to pledge military support to the rebellious *shāhzādah*, the more so as his Orthodox Christian brother Constantine was in the Byzantine military service: he was the head of the detachments of the *tourkopouloi*, the minimal number of which must have been 3000 men⁸³. At the most, the *malik* might have asked Byzantium for military support; at the least, he might have expected to receive shelter in the Byzantine territory. What could he have offered to the emperor for this?

The date of the *malik*'s visit to Constantinople and his attempt to meet the Emperor must be 1290-1291, after the date of the emperor's travel to Nymphaion but before the second phase of the revolt in Kastamonu, which Aqsarāyī recounts. Aqsarāyī writes that the rebellious *malik* Rukn al-Dīn (Kayūmarth) aimed at a separate kingdom, independent of Konya and Tabriz. The text of Pachymeres provides additional details for this picture: the *malik*, unable to obtain the independence of Kastamonu on his own, was

rulers: the Pope Nicholas IV (1288-1292), Edward I of England (1272-1307) and Philip IV le Bel of France (1285-1314). Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Īl-Khāns", p. 371. As to the Byzantine emperor, the *rabbānī* Šāwma mentions only the gifts of the emperor. In fact, the embassy ended in nothing. The Mongols and the Western powers did not form any alliance. Acre was besieged and captured by the Mamluks in 17 June 1291. Boyle, op. cit., pp. 371-372; Holt, *The Age of the Crusaders*, pp. 103-106.

⁸² Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*, pp. 82-84.

⁸³ See about the *malik* Constantine: Pachymeres, ii, p. 673, l.26 - p. 675, l.14. As Khalil Ece, one of the heroes of the Catalan company, the *malik* Constantine headed the detachment of *tourkopouloi*, which Gregoras counts as large as 3000 men. Gregoras, i, pp. 248, l.5 - 249, l.3. About 1309 the *malik* Constantine took the service of Stefan II Uroš Milutin (1282-1321), the king of Serbia. The *malik* had 1000 horsemen and 500 men of infantry. Gregoras, i, pp. 229, ll.11-17; 248, l.5 - 249, l.3; 254, ll.3-17; P. Wittek, "Yazijioghlu 'Ali on the Christian Turks of the Dobruja", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 14 (1952), pp. 662-666.

ready to accept Byzantine protection. This alliance could hardly have been a union of two equal states. On the contrary, it meant Byzantine superiority and protection: the *malik* in 1290-1291 gave his family as hostages to the Byzantines⁸⁴. We know nothing about the *malik*'s wife, but, fortunately, Pachymeres has information about the *malik*'s daughter: she was brought up at her uncle Constantine's court, and later the emperor Andronikos II married her to the *malik* Isaak, one of the Turks in Byzantine service, in 1306⁸⁵. The territory, which had to be under the Byzantine protection in 1291, was vast: the *malik*'s lands between Osmancık and Safranbolu, including Kastamonu.

Andronikos II declined this plan. The *malik* knew on his way to Nymphaion that the proposed talk with the emperor would be in vain. I think the only reason was that the emperor had decided to become good friend with the *ilkhān*. It might be that Imperial diplomacy could have settled the problem with the *malik*, by demanding of him the acknowledgement of the dual overlordship of Constantinople and Tabriz. There had been a precedent for such a double submission: Yavlak Arslān, the true vassal of both the sultan and the *ilkhān*, had sent one of his sons as a hostage to Constantinople. This means that he was a semi-dependent march lord, who was quite able to maintain separate contacts with Byzantium. Of course, the fact that his son was held hostage marks the submission of the ruler of Kastamonu to Byzantium⁸⁶.

Unfortunately, in 1291 such a double submission of the *malik* was absolutely impossible. After the death the *ilkhān* Arghun on 7 Rabī' I 690 AH (10 March 1291) his brother Geiykhatu was proclaimed the new *ilkhān* in the *khuriltai* on 24 Rajab 690 AH (23

⁸⁴ Pachymeres, ii, p. 673, ll.28-32.

⁸⁵ Pachymeres, ii, p. 671, ll.6-20; p. 673, l.33 – p. 675, l.8.

⁸⁶ Zachariadou suggests that "Nastratios" was taken hostage long before the death of Yavlak Arslān; most likely, he was captured during the military campaign of the Byzantines in Paphlagonia between 1273 and 1275. Zachariadou, "Pachymeres on the 'Amourioi' of Kastamonu", p. 70, n 41.

July 1291). As the new *ilkhān* had been governor in Rūm from 684 AH (9 March 1285 – 26 February 1286) and was well aware of the problems of the Sultanate⁸⁷, he decided to undertake a great punitive campaign in order to bring an end to the Turkish revolts. He left his residence at Alādāgh with a large army, which included the contingents of king David VII of Georgia (1291-1301)⁸⁸, on Friday, 4 Rāmādān 690 AH (31 August, 1291)⁸⁹. At the beginning of Dhū al-Qa'da (26 October 1291) he was in Kayseri. Thence the *ilkhān* had attacked the lands of the Karaman- and Eşrefoğulları by 16 Dhū al-Hijja (10 December 1291). The Mongols enslaved 7,000 women and children. The next target of Geikhatu was Laodikeia (Lādīq, Denizli), which at that time was probably a self-governing city. Because of the fear of the Mongols, the people of Denizli closed the gates. In vain: on Saturday, 29 Dhū al-Hijja (23 December 1291) the Mongols took the city and massacred its inhabitants within three days. The Greek Orthodox community of the city was spared by the special request of king David VII to the *ilkhān*⁹⁰. Having left a garrison in Laodikeia⁹¹, Geikhatu then devastated the lands of Menteşe. He returned to Konya in Muḥarrām 691 AH (24 December 1291 – 22 January 1292) where he ravaged the land of the Karamanoğulları Turks for the second time⁹². By 12 Rajab 691

⁸⁷ *Histoire des Seldjoudes*, 1952, p. 78 (Persian text); p. 54 (Turkish translation); Aksarayi, pp. 145, 146.

⁸⁸ *Histoire de la Géorgie depuis l'antiquité jusqu'au XIX-e siècle*, tr. M.F. Brosset, 2 vols (Sankt-Peterburg, 1849), i, p. 611.

⁸⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ii, p. 831; Rashīd al-Dīn, (Arends), iii, p. 132; Aksarayi, pp. 167-170.

⁹⁰ Bar 'Ebrāyā, p. 577; Bar Hebraeus (Budge), i, p. 492; *Histoire de la Géorgie*, i, p. 611. The Georgian chronicle mentions Denizli ('Thonghouzalo') as 'la ville grecque'.

⁹¹ *Histoire de la Géorgie*, i, p. 611.

⁹² *Histoire des Seldjoudes*, 1952, pp. 87-88 (Persian text); pp. 61-63 (Turkish translation); Shams al-Dīn Ahmad al-Aflākī al-'Ārifī, *Manāqib al-'Ārifīn*, ed. T. Yazıcı, 2 vols (Ankara, 1976-1980), i, p. 331-333; Aflākī, *Les saints des derviches tourneurs*, tr. Cl. Huart, 2 vols (Paris, 1918-1922; reprint: Paris, 1978), i, pp. 167-168.

7 AH (29 June 1292) the *ilkhān* had returned to Irān⁹³. In this situation, when the *ilkhān* launched an uncompromising policy of oppression of any separatist revolt in Asia Minor, the Byzantine diplomacy had no opportunity to reconcile the *malik* and the powerful *ilkhān*.

Thus, in 1291 the emperor Andronikos II was faced a dilemma: to continue the eastern policy of his father, who managed to secure the Byzantine eastern border with the help of the treaties with Hülegü, the first *ilkhān*⁹⁴, or to rupture the relations with the *ilkhāns* while supporting the *malik*. The second option would change the orientation of Byzantine foreign policy, and the Empire would openly become an ally of the Golden Horde and Egypt. Since the Mamluks took Acre in 1291 from the Crusaders and then Qal'at al-Rūm from Irān⁹⁵, a new Byzantine policy would also mean hostile relations with the West. The only positive element in this combination might have been the Empire's creation of a "sanitary zone" of the allied Turks of the *uj* against the *ilkhāns*. However, Andronikos II had chosen the first variant: to continue his father's eastern policy. The point was not only that any such "sanitary zone" would be very a weak shield for Byzantium and that the conflict with the *Īlkhānid* state might have been dangerous. The chief problem was that it was the frontier Turks who were the most ruthless and unpredictable enemy of Byzantium on her eastern borders. To change the whole of the Byzantine foreign policy would have required outstanding intuition, such as to have predicted that

⁹³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ii, p. 833; Rashīd al-Dīn, (Arends), iii, p. 133.

⁹⁴ Cf.: D.A. Korobeinikov, "Vizantia i gosudarstvo Il'khanov v XIII - nachale XIV veka: sistema vneshnei politiki imperii", in G.G. Litavrin, ed., *Vizantia mezhdū Zapadom i Vostokom: opyt istoricheskoi kharakteristiki* (St Petersburg, 1999), pp. 446-453.

⁹⁵ Abū al-Fidā', ii, pp. 362-363; al-Nuwayrī, xxxi, p. 226; Rashīd al-Dīn, ii, pp. 833-834; Rashīd al-Dīn (Arends), iii, pp. 133-134; Holt, *The Age of the Crusaders*, p. 105; J.B. van Loon, *Ta'rikh-i Shaikh Uwais. An Important Source for the History of Adharbayjan in the XIVth Century* (The Hague, 1954), pp. 140-142 (Persian text), pp. 43-44 (English translation); Boyle, op. cit., p. 373.

two decades later the power of the *ilkhāns* would weaken, and the Turkish emirates would appear on the Anatolian scene. So in the 1290s Andronikos II played a double game: on the one hand, he allowed the embassies of Egypt and the Golden Horde to pass freely via the Straits, and negotiated with the West about the marriage of his son Michael with Catherine of Courtenay⁹⁶; on the other, he maintained friendly relations with the *ilkhāns*. In particular, he agreed to meet the embassy of *rabban* Šāwmā in Constantinople in 1287 (and allowed them to pass further to the West) and refused to support the revolt of the *malik* Rukn al-Dīn in Kastamonu in 1290-1291. In 1295 the emperor received the relics of Ałuank' (Caucasian Albania) from Irān as a gift. It was the upheaval of the Turkish pressure on the Byzantine borders in the 1300, which forced the emperor to conclude the direct military alliance with the Ilkhānid state⁹⁷.

Let me now focus on the end of the story in Pachymeres. It seems that he had no reliable information about the circumstances of the death of the Rukn al-Dīn Kayūmarth who had been imprisoned in 1293. The later evidence in Gregoras is probably more reliable: the *malik* was secretly murdered (in prison). In 1295-1299 Kastamonu, as well as almost the whole of Paphlagonia and Western Pontus, was subdued by the *parwāna* Mu'īn al-Dīn Mehmed-bey, the son of the *parwāna* Mu'īn al-Dīn Süleymān⁹⁸. However, his power in Kastamonu was of different character to that of the Çobanoğulları, who were hereditary lords in the region. The *parwāna* Mehmed-bey II regarded Kastamonu only as a source of

⁹⁶ The negotiations started in 1288, were continued in 1291 and ended in nothing in 1294. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*, pp. 48-54.

⁹⁷ Stépannos Orbélian, *Histoire de la Siounie*. Traduit de l'arménien par M.F. Brosset, 2 vols (Sankt-Peterburg, 1864), i, p. 260. See also: S. Runciman, "The Ladies of the Mongols", in *Εἰς μνημὴν Κ. Ἀμύντου*, (Athens, 1960), pp. 48-53; Korobeinikov, "Vizantia i gosudarstvo Il'khanov", pp. 453-459.

⁹⁸ Aksarayi, pp. 217, 247-250.

income and established his power with help of mercenaries⁹⁹. Despite the oppression of the revolt in Kastamonu in 1293, the real power in the province remained in the hands of the local beys, such as the Çobanoğulları, supported by the nomad Turks.

In 1302 'Alī Çobanoğlu signed a peace treaty with Byzantium, but his troops did not accept this and took part in the battle at Bapheus¹⁰⁰. The hostile relations between Byzantium and the master of Kastamonu in 1299-1302 cost the Empire dear, since the double attack (from the Çobanoğulları and from the *amir* Osman) allowed the Turks to reach Nikomedeia for the first time. In 1304 'Alī, who was anxious about the new Byzantine-İlkhanid treaty (which was concluded in 1302), asked the Empire to grant him the lowland of Mesonision, between the Sangarios and Nikomedeia¹⁰¹. There is no further information concerning 'Alī and his *beylik* in the text of Pachymeres. We know about the end of the dynasty of the Çobanoğulları from the Ottoman sources. Süleymān-paşa, the son of Shams al-Dīn Yaman Candaroğlu, who was one of the 366 military holders of Kastamonu, "collected the Turks from Eflūğan (Eflani), where his *timar* was, and marched against Kastamonu. He besieged Mehmed-bey, the last son of Yavlak Arslān Çobanoğlu, and took him into captivity, and killed him, and became the master of Kastamonu and Borlu, the fortress, which had been named Zālifre at that time (modern Safranbolu)"¹⁰². Mehmed-bey ibn Yavlak Arslān was killed between 1309¹⁰³ and 1314, when Aqsarāyī mentions Süleymān-paşa as master of Kastamonu¹⁰⁴. It was the

⁹⁹ *idem*, pp. 217-218.

¹⁰⁰ Pachymeres, ii, p. 365, l.8.

¹⁰¹ Pachymeres, ii, p. 507, ll.15-21.

¹⁰² Yücel, *XIII-XV yüzyıllar Kuzey-Batı Anadolu Tarihi*, p. 58, with reference to the unpublished chronicle of Yazıcıoğlu 'Alī.

¹⁰³ For the date of the first mention of Süleymān-paşa in the sources, cf. Yücel, *XIII-XV yüzyıllar Kuzey-Batı Anadolu Tarihi*, pp. 56-57.

¹⁰⁴ Aksarayi, pp. 311-312; Heywood, "Kastamūnī", p. 738; Yücel, *XIII-XV yüzyıllar Kuzey-Batı Anadolu Tarihi*, p. 60.

dynasty of Candaroğulları that managed to establish the new *beylik* in Kastamonu, which existed until 1461.

The study of the revolt in Kastamonu reveals that the situation in the *uj* zone was very complex. Kastamonu, like Amasya, was the *uj* region. Apart from the Seljukid strongholds, we find there the possessions of the old Seljukid aristocracy, like those of the Çobanoğulları or the son of the *parwāna*, the fortresses, which were often defended by the mercenaries, the possessions of the Mongol *noyans* or the persons who received their lands from the *İlkhān*. Apart from the nomadic Turks whom Aqsarāyī describes as "demons-like impious men", we find the sedentary Muslim population, the Tājiks, as they were usually called.

Noteworthy is Gregoras' analysis of the revolt. Firstly, he underlines the danger of the Mongol punitive expeditions against the Turks as the latter then escalated their attacks on the Byzantine borders. Gregoras regards the revolt in Kastamonu as a watershed, after which the Turkish pressure on the Byzantine border greatly increased¹⁰⁵. Secondly, he points out that there were two major melting pots in Anatolia: one in Pamphilia, in southern Asia Minor, and another in Paphlagonia¹⁰⁶. This is a correct statement. The Byzantines always had problems with the Turks of 'Pamphilia', namely the Turks of Denizli and later of the Menteşeoğulları who had finally broken the Byzantine defences at Tralles¹⁰⁷. As to Kastamonu, the Turks were much restricted in that region, because the Mongols, who were the Byzantine allies from 1260, controlled Paphlagonia for a long time. The last İlkhānid coinage in the territory of the beylik of Süleymān-paşa Candaroğlu was struck on 725 AH (18 December 1324 - 5 December 1325). The last İlkhānid coins in Asia Minor were made in Ankara in 742 AH (17 June 1341

¹⁰⁵ Gregoras, i, p. 137, l.22 - p. 138, l.18

¹⁰⁶ Gregoras, i, p. 138, ll.18-22.

¹⁰⁷ Pachymeres, i, p. 597, ll.4 - p. 599, l.14. On the date of the capture of Tralles by the Turks (1284), see: Gregoras, i, p. 142, ll.16-17.

– 5 June 1342)¹⁰⁸. That is why the Mongol suppression of the revolt in Kastamonu did not lead to immediate Turkish penetration into Byzantine territory, as it had occurred on the Maeander Valleys in the 1280s-1290s but rather to a slow – though no less disastrous – migration towards the Lower Sangarios, the regions of Tarsia and Mesonision.

The third statement in Gregoras is the most important. He connects the increasing Turkish pressure on the Byzantines with the structural changes in the *uj* society. According to him, the Turks were at first led by the nobles (consider the *malik* in Kastamonu, who was a member of the royal dynasty). Later people of common origin, who possessed nothing but managed to organize the mobile groups of soldiers to penetrate Byzantine territory, replaced the aristocracy¹⁰⁹. The old dynasties, like those of Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī, the *parwāna* Mu'īn al-Dīn Süleymān or the Çobanoğulları gave way to new formations, like the Ottomans or the Candaroğulları.

It is evident that Byzantium in the 13th century maintained close contacts with oriental super-powers, like the Golden Horde, the Mamluk Egypt and the Īlkhānid state in Irān. Indeed, there were also minor states, the vassals of the Mamluks or the Mongols, like Georgia, Cilician Armenia, the Empire of Trebizond and the Sultanate of Rūm, with which Byzantium was in contact. What is new in my research is that Byzantine diplomacy was able to turn to her advantage the appearance of the Turkish *beyliks*. The problem is that these *beyliks* were not *states* at that time. I do not dare to speak of the *beylik* of the Çobanoğulları in Kastamonu before 1310, since

¹⁰⁸ M.A. Seifeddini, *Monety Il'khanov XIV veka* (Baku, 1968), pp. 86-87, 89; Sh.S. Blair, "The coins of the later Ilkhanids: a typological analysis", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 26 (1983), pp. 299-300, 311-312; Yücel, *XIII-XV yüzyıllar Kuzey-Batı Anadolu Tarihi*, pp. 143-144; cf. Aksarayi, p. 311; *The Geographical part of Nuzhat-al-Qulāb, composed by Hamid-allāh Mustawfi of Qazwīn in 740 (1340)*, ed. and transl. G. Le Strange [E.J.W. Gibb Memorial series, xxiii, part 1-2] (Leiden, London, 1915); i, pp. 94, 97 (Persian text); ii, pp. 95, 97 (English translation).

¹⁰⁹ Gregoras, i, p. 137, l.22-138, l.6.

the formal sovereignty of the Seljuk sultans was not still abolished. I think, however, that we can speak of what one might call the *proto-beyliks* - a power over a land, whatever character it had, usually semi-independent of the sultan, which was combined with military strength. In this complex situation the local landlords or nomadic leaders, who at that time were the vassals of the *ilkhān* and the sultan, might temporarily recognize the supremacy of the Byzantine Emperor. We find such a case in 1304 when, at the moment that the new *ilkhān* Öljeitü (1304-1316) mounted the throne and then agreed to prolong the Byzantine-Mongol treaty, 'Alī asked Andronikos II about the status of *foederatus* of the Empire¹¹⁰. I do not suppose that 'Alī had decided to abandon his native lands of Kastamonu and Safranbolu for the small region along the river Sangarios. Eastern Bythinia was very good summer pastureland for the nomads¹¹¹, and 'Alī tried to gain receive by a peace treaty the land, which was still in Byzantine hands. It might have been that he was afraid of the possible anger of the *ilkhān*, a Byzantine ally at that time, were he to wage war against the Byzantines. However, the Turks themselves ended the negotiations.

The temporary influence exerted by Byzantium on the Turkish frontier zone was not an innovation of Andronikos II. Pachymeres writes that Michael VIII Palaiologos hoped to use "the Persian fortresses" in the Sultanate of Rūm, lest the Mongols attack him¹¹². By the end of the 13th century the Byzantine diplomatic influence over the frontier had gone; the Empire could no longer try *divide et impera*. Byzantium entered the 14th century without an army or diplomatic protection for her borders, while her Oriental provinces were occupied by the Turks.

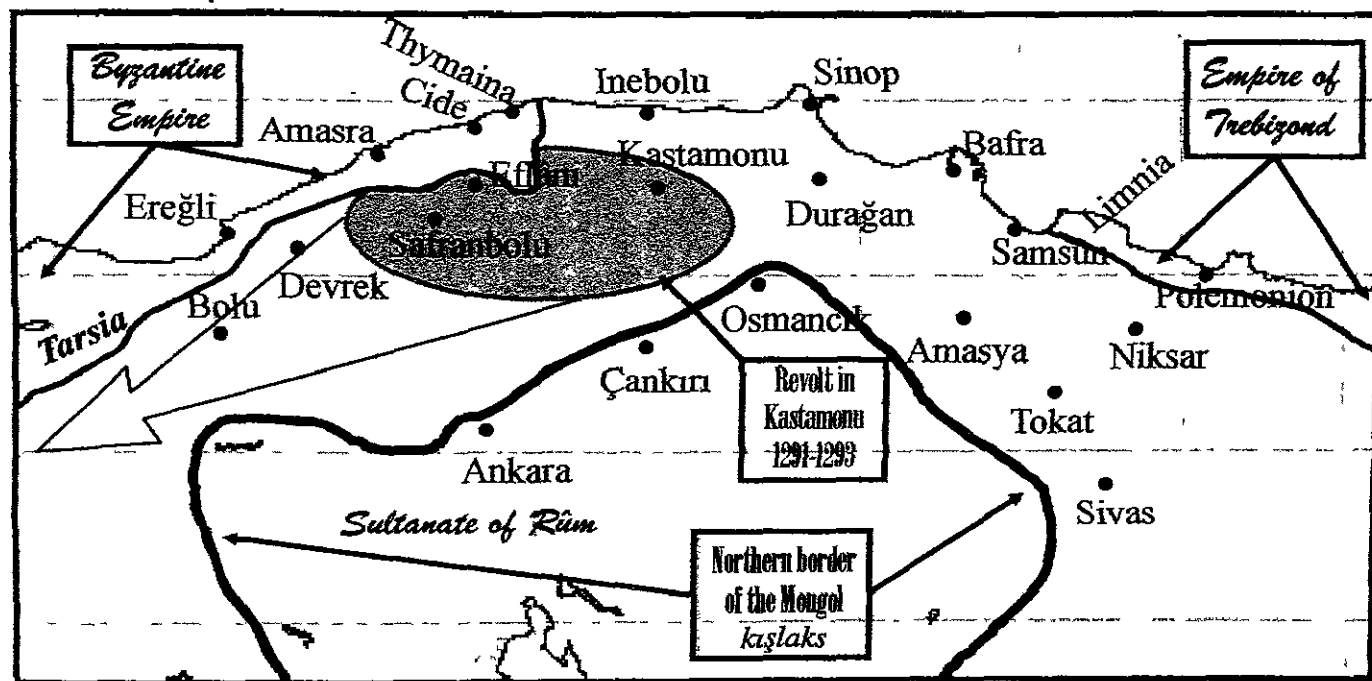
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¹¹⁰ Pachymeres, ii, p. 507, ll.9-28; Korobeinikov, "Vizantia i gosudarstvo Il'khanov", p. 455.

¹¹¹ Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans*, pp. 10-11.

¹¹² Pachymeres, i, p. 187, ll.6-7.

Paphlagonia in the end of the 13th century



COLONISATION LATINE EN ROMANIE. LE CAS DE LA PRINCIPAUTE FRANQUE DE MOREE (XIII-XVE SIECLE). INFLUENCES ET SURVIVANCES.

Cet exposé aborde le problème complexe de la colonisation médiévale prenant comme exemple la principauté franque de Morée fondée après la quatrième croisade, pendant le XIIIe et XIVE siècle. C'est une tentative d'exploiter la documentation publiée, surtout occidentale, afin de mieux connaître la situation pendant la domination franque et, en plus, examiner les influences et les survivances franques au domaine socio-économique et culturel. Les sources principales sont les chroniques contemporaines (Anonyme Chronique de Morée, Marino Sanudo Torsello, Ramon Muntaner) qui donnent une idée idéaliste et exagérée de la principauté, reflétant les intérêts et la mentalité de la classe chevaleresque. Notamment la chronique grecque de Morée, écrite au XIVE siècle par un gasmule, surtout le manuscrit de Copenhague, a des préjugés contre les Grecs¹. On dispose aussi d'une édition récente des Assises de Romanie (*Liber consuetudinibus Imperii Romaniae*),² du code législatif de la principauté, très important pour les institutions féodales appliquées et les obligations des vassaux envers leur seigneur. En plus, on a la chance de disposer des archives de Charles I^{er} et en partie de Charles II d'Anjou récemment rassemblées dans un seul ouvrage,³ une source d'information très précieuse pour la deuxième moitié du XIIIe

¹ Schmitt J., *The chronicle of Morea* (London 1967), Π.Καλονάργου, *Το Χρονικό του Μορέως* (Αθήνα 1940), ν.727.. την κακοσύνην τῶν Ρωμαίων τὴν ἀπιστίαν ὅπου ἔχουν...

² Antonella Parmeggiani, *Libro dele Uxanze e statuti delo imperio di Romania* (Spoleto 1998) , Jacoby D., *La féodalité en Grèce médiévale. Les assises de Romanie. Sources, application et diffusion* (Paris 1971).

³ Filangieri R., *I registri della cancelleria angioina*, I-XLV, (Napoli 1950-2000).

REVISITING THE IDEA OF THE BYZANTINE COMMONWEALTH

The Byzantine Commonwealth is a classic of historical scholarship, well known not only to Byzantinists and Slavists, but to historians of all stripes. It has defined the medieval Slavic world for generations of historians as merely a province of Byzantium.¹ This view has spread so widely that it is difficult to find a historian who does not agree with it, even among those who study medieval Slavica, not to mention those outside of Byzantino-Slavic studies, where the majority of medieval historians dismiss the Slavic lands, particularly the Orthodox ones, as belonging to Byzantine history and outside of "medieval Europe." This article lays out a challenge to the main premise of Dimitri Obolensky's classic work, that premise being that there existed a supranational organization subordinate to the Byzantine Emperor that was composed of the Slavic states of eastern Europe. The main focus of the article is on Obolensky's portrayal of Russia (more properly Rus', in this period)² as that is my specialty, but the article addresses some other aspects of his grand theory as well. Though his conception of a Byzantine Commonwealth was instrumental in the historiography of medieval Eastern Europe, it has stifled the study of the medieval history of much of that territory. Obolensky's explanation is too oversimplified and allows the Slavic nations no agency, and thus no need to have their own histories written in-depth. Their history has been left to primarily nationalist historians, who are often seen by the majority of

¹ Though it was not the first work to express this opinion, its persuasive argumentation and the eminence of the author have made it well-known in European historiography.

² Though Obolensky uses the more common "Russia" and "Russians" to refer to this kingdom and people, I will use what I consider to be more accurate, "Rus'" and "Rusians."

scholars as inherently biased. This was especially true during the Soviet period when, after the Second World War, the Soviet government again sanctioned the writing of Byzantino-Russian history. The history that was turned out was designed to show the autochthonous nature of much of Slavic, and especially Russian, culture, and to deny large-scale Byzantine influence. The obvious political nature of these works corrupted their ends and tainted their theses, adding further fuel to Obolensky's fire. A revision of Obolensky is due in the twenty-first century, however, this work endeavors only to point out some of the flaws in his argument; an exhaustive retheorization must wait.

The first problem with Obolensky's theory of a Byzantine Commonwealth is his conception of the limits of this world, which focuses on Slavic Eastern Europe.³ This is the obvious choice from a modern perspective as these countries were, until just over a decade ago, linked in an economic and political block. But one of the main questions that has to be asked in regard to this work is whether or not this framework died with the Soviet Union in 1991. For scholars, and others, coming of age and living in the post-World War II world, the overarching experience in life was the Cold War and the ensuing division between the Soviet Union and its satellite states on the one hand and the countries of the "West" on the other. Not coincidentally, the territory of the Byzantine Commonwealth espoused by Obolensky is very similar to the map of territory that the Soviets laid claim to after World War II, with the obvious exception of Constantinople and the Byzantine heartland, though the straits were definitely an object of interest to the Soviet government. This is also a similar map of the territories that the pre-Soviet Russians attempted to mobilize in the pan-Slavist movements of the nineteenth century.

³ With the exception of the Poles, whom he counts as too firmly placed in the Latin world to merit inclusion. Dimitri Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth, Eastern Europe 500-1453*.

(London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 1. Hereafter cited - Obolensky.

The countries that constituted Obolensky's Commonwealth were part of the Orthodox community and thus had prominent religious features to link them together, excepting only Hungary, which nonetheless had substantial Byzantine influences. This is, in fact, Obolensky's main reason for this grouping of countries, as his Commonwealth has as a large part of its backbone the Orthodox Church, headed by the patriarch of Constantinople. The argument for his Commonwealth largely proceeds along the lines that the Orthodox world acknowledged the primacy of the patriarch and the emperor in the religious sphere and that this granted a tacit measure of control in the political sphere.⁴ This continues a trope that is quite common in the writing of medieval history—whomever Christianizes a territory, controls that territory. However, I think the trope may have been overstated. To point out just two examples, both from Obolensky's Commonwealth (but from opposite sides of the ecclesiastical divide): Hungary was Christianized by German priests, but rarely acknowledged German superiority except through battle, and generally had closer relations with Byzantium, while Bulgaria accepted Christianity from Byzantium, but received an autocephalous Patriarch in 927 and stridently rejected any claims to Byzantine control during the course of both the First and Second Bulgarian Empires. The acceptance of a religion did not grant the converter political control.

Cultural influence is, however, another matter entirely. Obolensky, in his geographical grouping, does not include many areas that were just as culturally influenced by Byzantium as the Slavic territories and Hungary, such as the Caucasus and southern Italy.⁵ He claims that the choice to exclude these territories was based on geography; however, everywhere else in the text, culture

⁴ Ibid., 1. For an excellent discussion of the nature of this "tacit" argument and why such arguments should not be made, see: Simon Franklin. "The Empire of the *Rhomaioi* as Viewed from Kievan Russia: Aspects of Byzantino-Russian Cultural Relations." In *Byzantium – Rus' – Russia: Studies in the Translation of Christian Culture*. (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 511–12.

⁵ Obolensky, 2.

and especially religion are the dominant factors for membership in the Byzantine Commonwealth. It is contradictory to not include such obviously Byzantinized areas (especially as they both were occupied at one time by the empire, as Rus' and Hungary never were) when the theory of the Commonwealth is based on the Orthodox Church and the spread of Byzantine culture.

It is interesting to note that later in the text Obolensky references the Caucasus when discussing the hierarchy of the Commonwealth. There he cites Rus', in the ninth and tenth centuries, as receiving only "letters" from Constantinople, while the Caucasian kingdoms of Abasgia and Georgia received "orders."⁶ This clearly places the Caucasus in a far more subservient category. Thus, their inclusion in any supranational Byzantine community seems as if it should be taken for granted. In fact, in other of Obolensky's works they seem to be included more prominently, but they have been left out of the Commonwealth theory.⁷

Italy, on Byzantium's western edge, was in a similar situation. There was actual Byzantine occupation of southern Italy for much of the early Empire, and a great deal of effort was put into maintaining or regaining those possessions throughout the middle period of the Empire. Yet, those possessions were not included in Obolensky's conception of a Byzantine Commonwealth, again for the stated reason of geography. I would put forward that their eventual fate—as firmly part of the Latin world—was a deciding factor in their exclusion as well. Ihor Ševčenko, who shared some of Obolensky's ideas on this matter, repeatedly uses examples of Byzantine architecture from Norman Italy in his comparisons of Byzantine

⁶ Ibid., 200, citing the *Book of Ceremonies*.

⁷ For instance, in many of the essays in the collection *Byzantium and the Slavs*. Dimitri Obolensky. *Byzantium and the Slavs*. (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1994).

cultural influence with the Slavic world,⁸ but Italy is still not considered part of the Byzantine Commonwealth.⁹

As more and more studies are coming to show, Byzantium was the premier cultural influence of the middle ages. It was the only existing empire with any longevity, and anyone who wanted to validate their own royalty either attempted to mimic Byzantine customs and culture, marry a Byzantine princess, or both. Alexander Kazhdan asserts that all of medieval Europe felt themselves under the influence of Byzantium, as Byzantium was the last vestige of the Roman Empire.¹⁰ Once Byzantium's cultural influence is extended to all of Europe, the question of actual control becomes harder to answer. The Ottonian dynasty was influenced by Byzantium in many ways, including their choice of brides for Otto II and Otto III, but it is obvious that they were not under Byzantine control at any time; rather, they were more often rivals. However, when Rus', also influenced by Byzantine culture, raided Byzantium or imitated its grandeur, it has been portrayed as a child rebelling against its parents, not as an independent kingdom with its own foreign policy aims imitating the premier culture of the day. The difference is clear. The

⁸ Ihor Ševčenko. *Byzantium and the Slavs: In Letters and Culture*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1991), 6 and 108, for two examples.

⁹ I am not a specialist on Byzantine Italy, but for more information on the subject there are a wealth of sources: T.S. Brown. *Gentlemen and Officers: Imperial Administration and Aristocratic Power in Byzantine Italy, A.D. 554-800*, (London: British School at Rome, 1984), T.S. Brown. "Byzantine Italy c. 680-876" in *New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 2. 320-48. Rosamond McKitterick, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995)., Cristina La Rocca. *Italy in the Early Middle Ages, 476-1000*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)., V. von Falkenhausen, "A Provincial Aristocracy: the Byzantine provinces in Southern Italy (9th-11th century)", in *The Byzantine Aristocracy, IX to XIII centuries*. Michael Angold, ed. (Oxford: B.A.R., 1984), and Paul Magdalino. *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), especially 83-94.

¹⁰ Alexander Kazhdan. "The Notion of Byzantine Diplomacy." in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*, ed.; Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1990).

new literature on widespread Byzantine influence throughout Europe needs now to be applied to the Byzantine influence on the Slavs and used to free them from the myth of Byzantine control through culture.

Although Obolensky immediately dismisses the Caucasus and Italy, he does discuss Hungary, the only such non-Slav kingdom considered, and its relationship to the Byzantine Commonwealth. Hungary was truly between East and West in the middle ages. It shared frontiers with both the German¹¹ and the Byzantine Empires. It received missionaries from both, as well as crowns and royal brides. It, more than any other medieval kingdom, bore the brunt of the competition between the Empires and the variants of Byzantine and Roman Christianity. Obolensky's discussion of Hungary is outdated, but interesting for its time, and includes some salient points. However, modern scholarship would demonstrate that despite being influenced by Byzantium and having relationships, marital and otherwise, with Byzantium, Hungary was not part of any Byzantine Commonwealth, or subject to the emperor of Byzantium as Obolensky argues.

The country, or kingdom, that I would like to focus on is Rus', as it is my primary field of expertise. Obolensky places Rus' firmly in the Byzantine sphere from the very beginning of its history, in the Byzantine Commonwealth off and on beginning in the ninth century, and in for good only at the end of the tenth century, following Prince Vladimir's conversion. The Russians enter Obolensky's narrative in his geographical overview of the Commonwealth, where he discusses the northern frontier of Byzantium and the dangers from that direction. The constant threat of invasion from the north affected Byzantine attitudes toward Eastern Europe and forced them to pay close attention to developments in the area, he states.¹² It also created a desire in the Byzantines to "subdue, tame and civilise"

¹¹ More properly, the Holy Roman Empire, yet following the precedents set by the majority of medieval historians, I will use the term "German Empire."

¹² Obolensky, 26.

these people.¹³ Though a few hundred years too early (if these are the words of the Byzantines), this sounds none too different from the white man's burden of "civilize, democratize, and Christianize," especially given the implicit understanding that the Byzantine methodology for success was Christianization.¹⁴

Many of Obolensky's statements in regard to Rus' have to be questioned and challenged. An example of this is his statement that the Russians fought a "national crusade" to keep open "Russia's economic lifeline, the water route to Byzantium."¹⁵ Leaving aside a discussion of the religious and cultural baggage associated with the term "crusade" and its intended target of the pagan steppe nomads, it can be safely acknowledged that the route "from the Varangians to the Greeks," as it was called in the *Povest' vremenykh let* (PVL), was a main route for Russian commerce during the Kievan period.¹⁶ However, there were other routes of equal importance. Jonathan Shepard, a student of Obolensky's, makes the statement that the east-west route from the Germans to the Khazars, or from the Germans to Baghdad, was of more importance than the north-south route through Rus' in the early period of Russian history.¹⁷ Shepard is not the only one to have made this argument. Francis Dvornik also argued that Kiev was central not only to the north-south trade route, but also to the trade route from Germany to the steppe and beyond. Kiev was the center point of both of these routes and had a bustling mercantile population.¹⁸ Thus, the trade route with Byzantium, while important,

¹³ Ibid., 26.

¹⁴ See my discussion in the conclusion on the outdated character of some of Obolensky's argumentation.

¹⁵ Ibid., 41.

¹⁶ Samuel Hazard Cross and Oleg P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor, eds., *The Russian Primary Chronicle*. (Cambridge, Mass.: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1953), 53.

¹⁷ Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin, *The Emergence of Rus 750-1200*. (New York: Longman, 1996), 92.

¹⁸ Francis Dvornik, *The Slavs in European History and Civilization*. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1962), 5.

should not be characterized as the "economic lifeline." This gives the incorrect impression, although suitable for Obolensky's argument, that the Rusians were entirely reliant on Byzantium for their commercial livelihood.

This east-west connection is of importance in other ways as well, as illustrated by the dynastic marriages that the Rusians made with European families. Obolensky acknowledges the predominance of Russian marriage ties with countries to their west, such as Poland, Hungary, and Germany.¹⁹ Yet, as he was working primarily with the numbers from the landmark genealogical survey of Rus' done by Baumgarten in the 1920s, his numbers were incorrect.²⁰ Not only were marriages with the west predominant, marriages with Byzantium were almost nonexistent. Kazhdan, in his brief look at Byzantine-Russian marriages in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, reduces the number from Baumgarten's eight to approximately three.²¹ He does this by comparing sources, both Russian and Byzantine, to show that many of the marriages were concocted by later chroniclers to inflate the Russian-Byzantine ties during the Kievan period. The first of the three marriages Kazhdan accepts unreservedly was of great significance; the marriage of Anna Porphyrogenita to Prince Vladimir helped establish Rus' as a player in the international politics of the day and as a member of the Christian nations of Europe. Despite the great significance of this one marriage, when compared with the entirety of the Russian dynastic marriage tradition, three marriages over the course of at least 200 years is a minor factor, whereas nearly thirty marriages with westerners during these same two centuries needs to be considered as a substantial factor in the development and orientation of Rus' during

¹⁹ Obolensky, 226.

²⁰ N. De Baumgarten, "Genealogies et Mariages Occidentaux des Rurikides Russes du X-e au XIII-e Siecle," *Orientalia Christiana* IX, no. 25 (1927). While being the best known work of its kind on Rus', it is out of date nearly a century after its publication.

²¹ Alexander Kazhdan, "Rus'-Byzantine Princely Marriages in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 12/13 (1988/89).

this period. This is especially true when the modern scholarship on dynastic marriage in medieval Europe is brought into the discussion. This literature has stressed the importance of the dynastic marriage tie to link not only individuals, but also families and kingdoms, using the Byzantines as a chief example of this practice.²² The Russian dynastic marriages then would have served to create more and politically stronger ties with the rest of Europe than the Russians had with Byzantium. That these ties and their effects did not persevere through the Mongol conquest of Rus' and the internecine warfare that preceded it should not affect modern historians attempting to write the history of medieval Rus'.

Had the Russians been completely focused on the Byzantine Empire and in that orbit, they would have done anything and everything possible to advance to the top of the Byzantine marital hierarchy. This would have involved them making multiple marriages with the Byzantines to advance themselves, marrying conflicting Byzantine families to gain an advantage, and calling on Byzantine political and military support in their own struggles. These are things Russians never did with Byzantium, but did do with countries to their west. Multiple instances of these types of behavior can be shown in Russian-Polish relations, as well as in relations with Hungary and Germany. The reverse is also true—had Rus' been a firm member of the Byzantine Commonwealth, Russian princes would have been called upon to assist in Byzantine internal struggles or in the campaigns against the Seljuks or Ottomans. Despite having used the Rus' twice in the tenth century for military purposes (the campaign of Sviatoslav in the Balkans and Vladimir's sending of troops to put down the uprisings of Bardas Phocas and Bardas Sclerus) the Byzantines do not again turn to Rus' for military

²² Ruth Macrides, "Dynastic Marriages and Political Kinship," in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*; Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin, eds. (Brookfield, Vt.: Variorum, 1990). The marriages discussed are chiefly Byzantine marriages with westerners. Macrides herself points out the rarity of marriages with the northern countries, including Rus'.

assistance. They do appeal to the Rusians in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries for money to fight their holding action against the Ottomans, but not specifically for troops. Indeed, when soldiers are needed to assist against Seljuk aggression at the end of the eleventh century it is not to the north that the Byzantines turn, but to the west and the papacy. So, while Obolensky dismisses the Western ties of Rus' as largely irrelevant to the question of the Byzantine Commonwealth, it is, in actuality, vital to a more nuanced perception of the relations between Byzantium and Rus'.

Another major problem related to this issue is Obolensky's claim that the Slavs accepted the Commonwealth though they could not understand it. It was, he argues, too large, complex, and subtle to be understood by the Eastern Europeans.²³ This type of claim is part of an outdated vision of unsophisticated "barbarian" peoples and deserves to be challenged outright. Obolensky contends that the emperor's universal sovereignty was accepted, "without demur" by the educated classes in Rus'.²⁴ As a citation for this statement, quotations from the PVL are used to prove his claim. It must be pointed out, however, that the compilers of the PVL were not the ruling class in Rus' even if they were the educated classes. The compilers of the chronicle were monks, often Russian, working under the control of a Byzantine (usually by birth, but also by training) abbot who supervised them and their writings. It would, under those circumstances, be difficult not to acknowledge the supremacy of the emperor. The ruling elite, on the other hand, were not Byzantine in the slightest, and the methods of rule in Rus' evidenced this fact. Never were complex imperial formulas or politics imported into Rus', as they were into Bulgaria and later into Serbia. Despite the marriage of Anna Porphyrogenita to Prince Vladimir, he remained prince, and never became emperor, or tsar, as Peter of Bulgaria did in 927 with his marriage to a (non-Porphyrogenite) Byzantine

²³ Obolensky, 2.

²⁴ Ibid., 224. Again I refer you to Franklin's excellent discussion of this argument. Franklin. "The Empire of the *Rhomaioi* as Viewed from Kievan Russia."

princess.²⁵ So, Obolensky's statement is two-sided; the educated classes were most likely the monks, who were in monasteries run by Byzantines. Naturally they, in general, followed the Byzantine traditions. The princes, the ruling class, were not usually educated, but seemed to have believed in their own superiority and their indebtedness to no one. Unfortunately for historians, the monks were the only one of the two to keep records, and thus their perspective was the only one to be passed down to modern times.

This discussion of monks and monasteries leads, in turn, to Obolensky's statement that the metropolitans safeguarded Rusian loyalty to Byzantium.²⁶ While this statement seems safe, especially in light of the previous discussion of their control over their abbeys and monasteries, it is not generally true in regard to Rus' as a whole. The metropolitans exercised little political control in Rus' throughout the Kievan period. Obolensky does not cite a single instance of a metropolitan exercising political control, though he says, "their influence in political matters was often considerable."²⁷ He mentions that metropolitans admonished princes and were brought in to settle internecine warfare. An alternate reading of the sources on this subject would show that the Rusian princes simply felt a need to have a representative of the church at their gathering to bless their decisions, not that the decisions were made or influenced by the metropolitan. The closest Obolensky comes to offering an actual primary source citation is when he says that "more than one primate

²⁵ Though there is some talk of Vladimir taking the title of tsar, it has never been proven conclusively. Obolensky elsewhere advances the theory that Vladimir took the title *Basileus* after his baptism. Dimitri Obolensky, "The Principles and Methods of Byzantine Diplomacy," in *Byzantium and the Slavs*. (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1994), 17. For more information on the marriage of Peter and Maria Lekapena, see, Jonathan Shepard, "A marriage too far? Maria Lekapena and Peter of Bulgaria," in *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the Millennium*. A. Davids, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

²⁶ Obolensky, 226.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 227.

of Russia must have had occasion to admonish the princes of the land with the same authority with which St. Theodosius, abbot of the Russian monastery of the Caves [did]" when reprimanding a prince.²⁸ "Must have had" is not a strong historical argument, especially when applied to one of the most powerful abbots of the single most influential monastery in Rus'. The Kievan Caves Monastery was the spiritual center of Rus', and its abbots and monks were able to dictate policy to some princes at certain times in Russian history. This monastery also challenged the Byzantine metropolitans with their actions, including the canonization of various native saints. As such, perhaps equating this abbot with a host of Byzantine-appointed metropolitans is not the most accurate statement, and definitely does not indicate the power of the Byzantine metropolitans.

Obolensky, in fact, also ignores works that clearly state the metropolitans' lack of power over Rus'. A particular example of this kind of work that has received scholarly attention is the Canonical Responses of Metropolitan Ioann II, in which the metropolitan of Kiev condemns the Russian princes for marrying their daughters outside of the faith (most likely to Latins), discusses the difficulties of interpreting Byzantine ecclesiastical law and practice to fit the native Slavic culture in Rus', and bemoans the lack of proper Christians in Kiev.²⁹ Despite his complaints, the princes never stopped marrying their daughters outside of the Orthodox faith; in fact, marriages within it were rarer. Ioann II also addresses a perpetually interesting topic in the history of Russian culture, that of the influence of Byzantine law on the Russians. There is evidence that the Russians had copies of Byzantine law codes, many of them are extant. But here is a source on the scene who says it is difficult to get average Russians to follow such codes because they do not fit their

²⁸ Ibid., 227. emphasis added, citing *Das Paterikon des Kiever Hohlenklosters*, D. Tschizewskij, ed. (Chizhevsky) (Munich, 1964), 68. for the English, see. *The Paterik of the Kievan Caves Monastery*, Muriel Heppell, transl. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 74-76.

²⁹ "Canonical Responses of Metropolitan Ioann II," in *Russkaia istoricheskaja biblioteka* (Saint Petersburg: 1908).

everyday lives. This type of evidence is even more persuasive because it is a statement against interests. It would have been better for the metropolitan's personal image to have said that he was having no trouble interpreting Byzantine laws for the land of Rus' than to admit difficulty. Ioann II also shows, although not intentionally, that Russian culture was not becoming Byzantinized and that the church, the one firmly Byzantine influence on society, was not as powerful with the masses as it could have been. Had this not been true, Ioann II would not have had to worry about the lack of proper Christians or converting Byzantine law codes. The picture Ioann II, a Byzantine living in Kiev, paints of eleventh century Rus' is not one (outside of the monasteries) that would serve to indicate membership in a Byzantine Commonwealth subordinate to the Byzantine emperor.

Obolensky's *The Byzantine Commonwealth* is indeed a classic work of history, though, as illustrated here, it has numerous flaws in its conceptual framework as well as faulty details with regard to Rus' specifically. A core part of the problem with Obolensky's work is the era in which it was written. I make such comments because the work's era helped define it and its theories, which are now woven into the modern picture of the medieval world. These features must be pointed out and made bold to emphasize that the construction of the thesis itself is based on antiquated ideas of societies. Since Obolensky wrote his classic, the growing trend in historiography has been to remove any shred of personal bias in historical monographs. The move toward postmodernism, and now beyond, has led us as historians away from value judgments on the societies we study, precluding the use of pejorative terms such as "barbarian" and "primitive." These trends have radically altered the mindset of historians and have changed the way we look at every time period in history. Even though medieval and Byzantine history are often the last to feel the effects of such discipline-wide changes, these developments have been felt here as well and make *The Byzantine Commonwealth* feel out of date in the twenty-first century.

The other large problem that Obolensky's work faces is its scope. As a Russianist, I can pick apart his discussion of Rus' with counterexamples and, perhaps, overwhelming contrary proof. I could not do the same as well in regard to Bulgaria, Serbia, or elsewhere, though I suspect that a specialist on those areas could. In his introduction to the book, Obolensky acknowledges some of the limitations he is working with, such as the enormous scope of time, the shifting boundaries of countries and their passing into and out of the influence of Byzantium, and the wide-ranging geography of areas under Byzantine influence. However, despite this acknowledgement, the scope, both temporally and spatially, is too large for the theory he used, and resulted in generalizations often overwhelming specifics.

One of the major reasons to revisit the idea of the Byzantine Commonwealth is to put the medieval Slavs back into medieval history as a whole. The Byzantine Commonwealth codified the prevailing scholarship of its time and relegated all the Slavs but the Poles to the status of adjuncts to Byzantine history, and thus outside the purview of wider medieval history. One has only to read the first paragraph of the introduction to Florin Curta's controversial book, *The Making of the Slavs*, to learn a concise history of the problem, and he is only one of many academics attempting to challenge these old views.³⁰ Slavists, and Russianists in particular, are eager to see the Slavic world put back into medieval European history. New scholarship on medieval Rus' is being written by historians such as A.V. Nazarenko,³¹ who is attempting to emphasize the European ties of the medieval Rus'. This is assisted by a growing number of studies that focus on the medieval Baltic and show the close ties Russian cities such as Novgorod, Pskov, and their respective hinterlands had with Scandinavia and Germany, before, during, and

³⁰ Florin Curta. *The Making of the Slavs: History and Archeology of the Lower Danube Region, c. 500-700*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1.

³¹ A.V. Nazarenko. *Drevniaia Rus' na mezhdunarodnykh putiakh: Mezhdistsiplinarnye ocherki kulturnykh, torgovykh, politicheskikh svyazei IX-XII vekov*. (Moscow: Iazyki russkoi kul'tury, 2001).

after their well-known membership in the Hansa. Early Russian history is moving away from the "road from the Varangians to the Greeks" that gave all the emphasis to the endpoints of Scandinavia and Byzantium and none to Rus', to studies in which Rus' is the destination and an actor, not a character to be acted upon. Slavists are also appearing more and more at medieval history conferences, such as the one at Kalamazoo, Michigan, and organizations such as the Early Slavic Studies Association, among others, are attempting to encourage this trend. There is no reason not to assume that this trend will grow in the coming years.

Putting the Slavic world back into medieval Europe would be encouraged by a mindset change among both Byzantinists and medievalists. It is important for Byzantinists to remember that the Slavic world is not an offshoot of Byzantium and exclusively their own backyard, while medievalists should realize that the Slavic world is in their backyard, literally—adjacent to Germany and Italy and often rife with papal intrigue and influence. Once these changes occur, medieval Slavic studies can move out of the shadow of Byzantium and be recognized as a legitimate part of medieval European history.

But where does that leave the Byzantine Commonwealth? A refined idea of the Byzantine Commonwealth could potentially clarify historical understanding of Byzantine cultural, religious, and political relations with its neighbors and the medieval world as a whole. Such a study would have to move beyond a "Byzantium and the Slavs" perspective and be inclusive of Byzantine influence on and relations with all of their neighbors. This theoretical study, however, would also need to have a more refined conceptual underpinning than Obolensky's classic work and would need to utilize the recent scholarship that addresses Byzantine influence on places as diverse as the Caucasus and Anglo-Saxon England for it to be of wide use to scholars. Byzantium occupied a place between East and West, existed for a thousand years, and influenced millions of people. A reformulation of the idea of the Byzantine Commonwealth would

take years and would work best were it a collaborative work of scholars with a similar mindset and different areas of expertise. Such a work would be a mammoth undertaking, but could turn out an incredibly worthwhile product that would do honor to Obolensky's original creation. But the time for such over-arching monographs that attempt to fit large expanses of time and space into one particular theory may have passed. Historical focus in the beginning of the twenty-first century is on smaller time-periods and smaller spaces, and has moved away from political and ecclesiastical history. A revision of the theory of the Byzantine Commonwealth may be an idea whose time has passed or not yet come. But for all that Obolensky attempted to accomplish with the original *The Byzantine Commonwealth*, it deserves to be read and understood, though not to be accepted as the final answer on the question of Byzantium and the Slavic world in the middle ages.

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THE NATURE OF THE EARLY OTTOMAN STATE

HEATH W. LOWRY

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Given the paucity of contemporary sources, few questions have been more challenging for Ottoman historians than the question of how the early Ottoman enterprise, which emerged in Bithynia around the 1300s, was established. The ongoing debate on this issue was initiated by the publication of *The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire*, authored by Herbert A. Gibbons in 1916.¹ Gibbons (1880-1934) claimed that the Ottomans were in fact a new "race," constituted of Christian Greek, Slavic, and pagan Turkish converts to Islam, and that the Ottoman administrative practices were mere continuations of the Byzantine bureaucratic practices. It did not take long for Gibbons' thesis to find two strong opponents, Fuad Köprülü (1890-1966) and Paul Wittek (1894-1978). The Turkish historian Fuad Köprülü first refuted Gibbons' idea of institutional continuity between the Byzantine and Ottoman administrative practices,² and argued that the Ottomans were already Muslims at the beginning of the 14th century, and that they were well trained in the Seljukid administrative practices, as they came to Anatolia before the Mongol invasion and lived through the Seljukid and Ilkhanid periods. Later, in a series of lectures delivered at the Sorbonne in 1934, Köprülü

¹ Herbert A. Gibbons, *The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire: A History of the Osmanlıs up to the Death of Bayezid I 1300-1403*. Oxford, 1916.

² Fuad Köprülü, "Bizans Müesseselerinin Osmanlı Müesseselerine Te'siri Hakkında Bâzı Mülâhazalar." *Türk Hukuk ve İktisat Tarihi Mecmuası* 1 (1931): 165-313. This article was translated into English and published in book format. See, M. Fuad Köprülü, *Some Observations on the Influence of Byzantine Institutions on Ottoman Institutions*. Trans. and ed. by Gary Leiser, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1999.

rejected the idea that the foundation of the Ottoman Empire was an isolated Bithynian phenomenon, and emphasized the tribal background of the early Ottoman enterprise, as well as the peculiarities of the 'frontier society' in Bithynia.³ But the reaction that was to have the longest lasting and the most widespread impact in academic circles came from the Vienna-educated Ottoman historian Paul Wittek. Like Köprülü, Wittek announced his own theory, commonly known as the *ghazā*- (holy war) or *ghāzī*- (holy warrior) thesis, in a series of lectures delivered at the University of London in 1937.⁴ In the *ghāzī*-thesis, Wittek explained the emergence of the Ottoman polity with the religious fervor of the frontier warriors, who were mobilized across the Byzantine frontier in the 13th century. Although Wittek's thesis has been criticized by many scholars since its first formulation in 1937, it has continued to be the dominant paradigm for Ottoman historians until today.

Heath W. Lowry's *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* is the latest contribution to this ongoing debate. Conceptual, contextual, and technical shortcomings of the book notwithstanding, Lowry tackles with an eminently important issue in the formation of the Ottoman State, i.e. the role of the Byzantine and Balkan nobility in the process leading to the establishment of the imperial military and administrative apparatus in the post-1453 period, and this in itself justifies a long summary and review of this book in the *Byzantinische Forschungen*. The key point in his thesis is that of a symbiosis and cohabitation as opposed to a conflict between Christians and Muslims in Bithynia. According to Lowry, the Ottoman State was founded by several Christian and Muslim warriors organized as

³ Köprülü's lectures were first published in French: Fuad Köprülü, *Les origines de l'empire ottoman*. Paris: Boccard, 1935. A Turkish translation with some revisions, and a new introduction by the author was published almost twenty-five years later: Fuad Köprülü, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Kuruluşu*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1959. An English translation appeared recently: M. Fuad Köprülü, *The Origins of the Ottoman Empire*. Trans. and ed. by Gary Leiser, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.

⁴ Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*. London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1938.

a "predatory confederation" in order to plunder and pillage the surrounding areas. These warriors elected Osman, the eponymous founder of the Ottoman Empire, as their leader.⁵ Osman represented a Turkish Muslim group who were already well versed in the "classical Islamic administrative practices." As he was the leader of the confederation, Christians living in the territories controlled by this "predatory confederation" began to convert to Islam according to the maxim *cuius regio eius religio*. In this early phase of the state formation, the Ottoman rulers were not more than the "first among equals," and the Ottoman society was one of an "Islamochristian synthesis," in which Christians and Muslims were equal. Later in the 16th century, Islam began to determine the color of political and social relations, and increasingly became a prerequisite for enrollment in state service. The inclusion of the key Arab lands, i.e. Syria and Egypt, at the beginning of the 16th century triggered a regressive transformation to the "classical Islamic model" in Ottoman history.

Lowry divided his book into an Introduction, eight chapters, and four appendices. In the Introduction, he asks his basic question: Is the ghāzī-thesis of Wittek a proper explanation for the foundation of the Ottoman Empire? He then proceeds to lay out the general structure and methodology of his book.

Chapter One ("The Debate to Date") is devoted to the review of previous scholarship. The author densely summarizes the intellectual production of twenty scholars in just nine pages, but he fails to draw a coherent picture of the extant scholarship on the foundation of the Ottoman Empire. Lowry contrasts all of these scholars to Wittek's thesis without

⁵ The author categorizes the election theme simply as a Turco-Mongol practice of *khuriltay*. (p. 65) Although this is an interesting comparison, one should bear in mind that this ritual might also serve the legitimization of a power-balance established before an election process. See, for an introductory discussion of this issue with many examples from different contexts, Denis Sinor, "The Making of a Great Khan." In *Altaica Berolinensia: The Concept of Sovereignty in the Altaic World*. Ed. Barbara Kellner-Heinkele (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1993), pp. 241-258.

adequate explanation of their own respective intellectual positions. Therefore, after reading this chapter one might gain the impression that whole generations of scholars in the 20th century have wrestled only with the *ghāzī*-thesis. Although it is accurate to stress the impact of Wittek's thesis, Lowry's presentation escapes some important debates, which were discussed independently from the *ghāzī*-thesis. For example, the author does not include Zeki Velidi Togan, whose suggestions regarding the political and administrative connections of the early Ottomans with the Golden Horde and the Ilkhanate recently found proponents with Colin Heywood and Rudi Lindner.⁶ For a more comprehensive appreciation of the existing scholarship, this chapter should be read together with Cemal Kafadar's chapter on "The Moderns" in his *Between Two Worlds*.⁷

Chapters Two and Three focus on Wittek's sources and methodology. Paul Wittek had presented two pieces of evidence to support his theory: selected passages from Ahmedi's (d. 1413) *İskendernâme* (the Book of Alexander), and an inscription found in Bursa, which is dated to 1337. Chapter Two ("Wittek Revisited: His Utilization of Ahmedi's *İskendernâme*") is devoted to the reexamination of the *İskendernâme*. Wittek had based his argument on the *İskendernâme*'s discourse on the *ghazā*. According to Wittek, *ghazā* means "what the Ottomans felt about themselves and their state—that they were community of *Ghāzīs*, of champions of the Mohammedan religion; a community of Moslem march-warriors, devoted to the struggle with the infidels in their neighborhood."⁸ Lowry argues that Wittek's reading of the *İskendernâme* is "a highly selective one," (p. 15) and ignores the entirety of the work and the

⁶ Colin Heywood, "Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluş Problemi: Yeni Hipotez Hakkında Bazı Düşünceler." In *Osmanlı*. Vol. 1, Ed. Güler Eren, Ankara, 1999, pp. 137-145. Rudi P. Lindner, "How Mongol Were the Early Ottomans?" In *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*. Eds. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 282-289. For Zeki Velidi Togan's analysis of the early Ottoman history, see, Zeki Velidi Togan, *Umumî Türk Tarihine Giriş*. 3rd ed., (Istanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1981), pp. 324-356.

⁷ Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 29-59.

⁸ Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*, p. 14.

discourse therein. Aḥmedī, according to Lowry, "in no way supports the view that the early Ottomans saw themselves as servants of God whose role was to purify the Earth from the filth of polytheism." (p. 16) Lowry argues that Aḥmedī's work cannot be seen as a chronicle, rather, it should be evaluated as a "mirror for princes" type of work, which aims at setting moral standards for the rulers and to "encourage his intended patrons (first Bayezid I and then Prince Süleyman) to look westward" instead of attacking other Anatolian principalities. (p. 25) According to Lowry, the concept of *ghazā* in the *İskendernāme* means an expansionist policy in the Balkans as opposed to warfare against fellow Muslims in Anatolia. (p. 31)

The following chapter ("Wittek Revisited: His Utilization of the 1337 Inscription") is a philological and epigraphic critique of Wittek's reading of the 1337 Bursa inscription. The author argues that Wittek's reading of the inscription is partially incorrect, as he abridged a long chain of titles so as to make them fit into his own conceptual framework. He agrees with Wittek on the point that the inscription supports Aḥmedī's concept of the *ghazā* so long as the *ghazā* in the *İskendernāme* is considered a literary topos, but he rejects the idea that the title *ghāzī* attached to the early Ottoman sultans in the Bursa inscription refers to any sort of religiosity on their part. He also compares the titles found in the Bursa inscription with contemporary Seljukid inscriptions, and finds strong resemblances (p. 41), concluding that the inscription cannot be an original source for early Ottoman history, as it just reiterates what the Ottomans learned from their predecessors. In fact, Lowry weakens his own argument which he made in the previous chapter by saying that some Ottomans did believe that they were *ghāzīs*, because the 1337 inscription is authentic, and there are other evidences, mainly epigraphic, to support this argument. But the problem is, according to Lowry, that the concept of *ghazā* which Wittek thought he found in these two sources was not actually *the ghazā*, i.e. the holy war; it was something else. This something that Lowry treats in the following chapter. In other words, Wittek's methodology was not fundamentally wrong. He found evidence for his thesis in a narrative source (be it a versified chronicle or a mirror for princes type of work) and supported this

evidence by an independent epigraphic source. As we will see, this is exactly the same methodology that Lowry applied in his book.

Some of the author's interpretations in this chapter should be read with caution. Thus, Lowry interprets the tombstone inscription of Bayezid I (d. 1402) as just an overstatement of his surviving son, i.e. Prince Süleyman, who was grieving after his father's humiliation at the hands of Timur in the Battle of Ankara in 1402. Such an interpretation misses an important contrast hid in the titles listed in the inscription, which reads "Bayezid Han the son of Murad Han, the Great Sultan, the Master of the Kings of the Arabs and Persians." It seems that the composer of this inscription tried to collect all possible venues of legitimization in just one chain of titles, as the inscription includes the title "Han (*khān*)", which was the title used by the descendants of Chinggis Khan, whose prestige was still strongly felt in 15th century Anatolia, the "Sultan," which refers to non-caliphal authority in Islamic political discourse, and the "Kings of the Arabs and Persians," which refers to an idea of universalism transcending Islam. Therefore, whoever composed these lines knew exactly which message he was trying to convey. Lowry is certainly right when he points at the oddity of the inscription. Who would expect such bombastic titles from the son of a defeated ruler anyway? However, we can also read it as an indication of the ideological vacuum that the shock after the defeat in 1402 by Timur created in the Ottoman political discourse. In this time of crisis, in which all the previously acknowledged social hierarchies and norms were in a situation of disarray, the inscription attempts to fill in the gap by referring to all possible titles with highest universalistic reverberations. The emergence of the Ottoman historical consciousness after the Timurid invasion, a notion that Halil İnalcık and Cemal Kafadar argued before, can also be considered parallel to the evocations of this seemingly odd inscription.⁹ Therefore, I find the inscription on Bayezid I's tombstone a most pertinent example of the post-Timurid Ottoman political discourse, which vacillated between recovery from utmost defeat and the quest for legitimacy at the same time.

⁹ Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, pp. 94-95.

From a technical point of view, Lowry compares his reading of the inscription only with Wittek's reading, but does not go into detail regarding other scholars' views on this issue. For example, Lowry quotes Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi as a reference on page 36, but Lowry's reading is at some points closer to Wittek's suggestions than Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi's. Ayverdi reads *yamîn* where Wittek, Mantran, and Lowry read *pahlavân*, but at the same time Mantran omits the section which was read as *jihân* by Wittek, *al-imân* by Ayverdi, and *al-zamân* by Lowry.¹⁰ Hence, a more detailed comparison of all variant readings would have definitely been helpful to understand the textual peculiarities of the inscription.

Chapter Four ("What Could the Terms *Gaza* and *Gazi* Have Meant to the Early Ottomans?") is an attempt to reconstruct the indigenous perspectives on the term *ghazâ*. It is true that Ahîmedî talks about *ghazâ*, and it is also true that the 1337 inscription includes *ghâzî* as a title. So, what was wrong with Wittek's methodology? Actually, Lowry argues, the whole issue can be solved with a simple translation trick. The author argues that Ahîmedî distinguished *ghazâ/ghâzî* as religious terms from the "Realpolitik/secular" terms *akın/akıncı* (raid/raider). The early Ottomans, according to Lowry, were not more than a plundering confederacy, whose aim was to gain booty and slaves, rather than to convert the Christians of Bithynia and the Balkans to Islam. (p. 46)

No historian today can ignore the importance of booty in any imperial conquest. The problem here is not whether the Ottomans were plunderers or holy warriors, as this depends on the side on which one stands. Rather, the question is how the Ottomans justified and perceived their expansionist policies. It seems as though Wittek was aware of this point, because he stated that the *ghazâ* is about what the Ottomans felt about themselves and their community.¹¹ It was nothing more than one of the ways of describing and legitimizing the Islamic universal/imperial ideology in these centuries.

¹⁰ Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*, p. 53; Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mi'mârîsinin İlk Devri*. (Istanbul: İstanbul Fetih Cemiyeti Yayınları, 1966), p. 59; Robert Mantran, "Les inscriptions arabes de Brousse." *Bulletin d'études orientales* 14(1952-54), p. 89.

¹¹ Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*, p. 14.

The further we go, the more the analysis becomes methodological and epistemological, i.e. the role of discourse and ideology in the construction and deconstruction of communal and political identities. If we accept that the discursive structures, including ideology, religion, ancestral evocations, etc. are instrumental in social processes, then we can see the *ghazā* as one of the motives of the early Ottoman expansion.¹²

In Chapter Five ("Toward a New Explanation"), the author sets out to formulate his own thesis, which postulates a society which was not divided along religious lines; rather cohabitation and a symbiotic way of life were nurtured by the shared social environment and common interests of Muslims and Christians. In such an environment, according to the author, the religiously defined *ghazā* ideal would simply not work. We are not told whether this symbiosis was an exclusively Bithynian phenomenon, but the author's real emphasis is not this point anyway. A passage found in Theodore Spandounes' *On the Origin of the Ottoman Emperors* reflects the central theme of this chapter (p. 55):

Now in the time of Michael Paleologo [Michael VIII, 1261-1282], the first of his house to reign as Emperor in Constantinople, there were four lords of the Turks in the vicinity. One was called Michauli, the second was Turachan, the third Evrenes, the fourth Ottomano...One day they assembled together to elect one lord from among them. Each of these present had his own say but all were agreed that none could match Ottomano in authority, courage and strength of character.

Tracing the evocations of this passage, the author calls the nucleus of the Ottoman Empire a "predatory confederation," which is loosely defined as the "commingling of frontier peoples, which served to bring together Muslim and Christian warriors in Bithynia." (p. 57) The basic motivation

¹² See, for similar discussions, Bruce Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society. Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

of this confederation was to plunder surrounding towns and villages across the Byzantine frontier. So, how did this confederation ensure its success? Moreover, how could a newly emerging polity manage to convince the local populations to convert on the one hand, while pillaging and plundering their property on the other? The *istimâlet* (gaining of goodwill) mechanism, a theory originally formulated by Halil İnalcık, guarantees the support of Christian subjects. (p. 91) The early Ottoman state guaranteed the security of the Bithynian Christian neighbors, hence, got their support and participation, which paved the way for a cooptation between the newly emerging Ottoman polity and the Christians in Bithynia. The classic avalanche metaphor was not irrelevant either: "Nothing succeeds like success, and with the example of numerous Greek Ottomans like Köse Mihal in front of them, the option of switching to the winning team must have been particularly attractive to the local Greek rulers of the castles and towns of Bithynia." (p. 57) Christian converts were the primary source of the manpower of the Ottoman polity "together with a steady influx of immigrants."¹³ Finally, the author comes very close to Gibbons' postulation: "The end result was the disappearance of both the local Christian nobility and their subject peasant populace. In their place was formed a new symbiosis: the Muslim Ottomans." (p. 67)

Today, we can almost be sure that whoever put the first brick into the wall was not alone. However, the evidence used by the author to identify these 'founding fathers' is rather dubious. The author argues that the title *malik* ("king/lord") was used only for Köse Mihal and Evrenos besides the Ottoman rulers in the surviving contemporaneous epigraphic and documentary sources. Hence, Köse Mihal and Evrenos were the co-founders of the Ottoman Empire. Technically, Lowry's methodology is unconvincing, as he isolates the term *malik* from its grammatical and textual contexts. In the examples given by Lowry, the term *malik* is always

¹³ Although in another place, the author discards the population pressure as an important factor in the formation of the early Ottoman polity. He says on page 139 that "Had there been hordes of Muslim fighters moving into the Ottoman Bithynia in the first half of the fourteenth century, it seems likely that a far different state would have emerged."

used together with another collective noun, such as *malik al-ghuzāt* (leader of the holy warriors), Malik of the Turkmens, etc. But, the 'term' *malik* in this format can be used in honorifics for any position in any level of the political and administrative hierarchy. The best source for checking this argument are contemporary epistolary manuals, a type of source which Lowry has surprisingly not used. Such manuals list the norms for titles and honorifics as well as some exemplary documents or letters. We are lucky to have such a work written in Kastamonu, east of Bithynia, in the 14th century. In this work, the title *malik* is used not only for the *Mulūk* (pl. of *malik*), which are second only to the sultans in the political taxonomy given in this work, but also for other administrative offices and dignitaries: *malik mulūk al-vuzarā' fī al-'ālam* ('king' of the 'kings' of viziers in the world) or *malik vuzarā' al-sharq va al-gharb* ('king' of the viziers of the east and west) are used for viziers; *malik al-umarā' fī al-'ālam* ('king' of amirs in the world) is used for the Atabek, *malik al-mustahfizīn* (chief of the guardians) is used for fortress commander, etc.¹⁴ The term *malik* does not mean more than a leader, commander, possessor, or principal in these examples, hence Lowry's straightforward translation of "Lord/king," while being the primary translation of the term *malik* found in any modern dictionary is certainly misinterpreting and overstating the meaning of this term in its own historical context. This also shows that the methodology pursued by the author is at times biased, if not teleological. Lowry could have reached an entirely different conclusion by focusing on the title 'sultan' instead of *malik*, as it was a politically and ideologically more sensitive term in the political culture of the late medieval Islamic world,¹⁵ and it was used only by the Ottoman sultans in the table presented in

¹⁴ Adnan Sadık Erzi, *Selçukîler Devrine Âid İnşâ Eserleri, Ia.: Hasan b. 'Abdî'l-Mu'min el-Höyî, Gunyetü'l-Katib ve Munyetü't-Tâlib and Rusûmu'r-Resâ'il ve Nucûmu'l-Fazâ'il*. (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1963), pp. 5, 6, 8.

¹⁵ A. Ayalon, "Malik." *EL²*, Vol. VI, p. 261. Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 53-56. See also, John B. Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire*. (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1999), pp. 4-5.

Appendix 2 of the book under review here. Consequently, a more comprehensive study, including and comparing all the titles found in the indigenous sources with the external evidence as well as the contemporary epistolary handbooks, would have yielded a fuller picture of the early Ottoman political culture.¹⁶

Chapter Six ("Christian Peasant Life in the Fifteenth-Century Ottoman Empire") is an in-depth analysis of the Bithynian symbiosis and its evolution through the 16th century. The author argues that increasing centralization through the 16th century changed the nature of the Ottoman Empire towards a model in the "classical Islamic sense," creating a distance from a syncretic state organization whose roots can be found in the late-Byzantine practices. What was the reason for this move towards an increasingly more centralized, Islamic-colored, and according to the author, exclusivist and static system? The author's tentative answer to this question is the formation of an "Islamic bureaucracy," which gained momentum during the reign of Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512), and was finalized after the conquest of the Levant and Egypt in 1517 (p. 114). The author points at the intrusion of "Arab scholars" into the Ottoman bureaucracy as one of the reasons for this change. He further argues that this is just another cause of the Ottoman decline (pp. 112-113), corroding a previously well functioning, vibrant, and flexible system. Arabic terminology in bureaucratic parlance replaced the Greek and Slavic elements, and bureaucratic practices, as the author observes in recordings

¹⁶ Since Lowry maintains the idea that the early Ottomans were well versed in Ilkhanid and Seljukid administrative practices, it is rather surprising that he did not use the contemporary epistolary works in his analysis. Other than al-Khūyī (*el-Höyî*)'s work, there are two other sources available in print for further research on this issue. These are Nakhjivānī's (fl. mid-14th century) *Dastūr al-kātib fī ta'yīn al-marātib*, which was written in Tabriz and reflects the late Ilkhanid and Jalayirid chancery practices, and Yahyā b. Meḥmed al-Kātib's (15th century) *Menāhicü'l-inşā'*, which is the earliest Ottoman chancery manual. See, Muḥammad b. Hindūshāh Nakhjivānī, *Dastūr al-kātib fī ta'yīn al-marātib*. 2 vols. in 3 parts, ed. A. A. Ali-zade, Moscow: Izd-vo Nauka, 1964-1976; Yahyā b. Meḥmed al-Kātib, *Menāhicü'l-inşā'*. Ed. Şinasi Tekin, Cambridge, Mass., 1971 [Sources of Oriental Languages and Literatures 2].

of the local law codes (*kanunname*) at the beginning of the cadastral surveys (*tahrir defterleri*), were frozen and stopped reflecting local circumstances and peculiarities. But, most importantly, religion became an absolute prerequisite for advancement in the Ottoman bureaucratic structure. (p. 134) Arguing that after the 16th century the Ottoman bureaucratic structure became static is a very bold statement. That the local law codes became "static documents" does not necessarily imply an overall stagnation in state structure; it might just as well indicate that such a practice became irrelevant for the bureaucratic reproduction mechanisms in these centuries. (p. 111)

Chapter Seven ("The Last Phase of Ottoman Syncretism—The Subsumption of Members of the Byzanto-Balkan Aristocracy into the Ottoman Ruling Elite") is, in the eyes of this reviewer, the most interesting chapter in the book. The author examines the continuities between the late Byzantine/Balkan and Ottoman political elites. It is well known that the Ottomans conscribed Christian children to the palace service through a system called *devsirme*. However, what the author emphasizes in this chapter is not the conscription of Christian children to the state service, but the subsumption of the Byzantino-Balkan aristocracy into the Ottoman ruling elite. The author lists seven grand viziers of Byzantine or Balkan nobility who held office between 1453-1516. Considering the fact that these men advanced as high as to the post of the grand vizier, one cannot ignore the importance of the role these people played in the formation of the Ottoman imperial culture.

In Chapter Eight ("The Nature of the Ottoman State"), the author argues at the outset that the early Ottoman state had a "high Islamic" character alongside with the Islamic formal administrative culture.¹⁷ At the same time, "these high Islamic tendencies coexisted with the extensive recruitment and utilization of both free Christians and recent converts into the elite of the newly forming Ottoman polity." (p. 131) "Had there been hordes of Muslim fighters moving into the Ottoman Bithynia," the author

¹⁷ Actually, Lowry expresses the exactly opposite view on page 20 when he rejects Colin Imbers' suggestion that the *ghazā* was an "act of worship."

argues, "the indigenous Christian population would have been overwhelmed," and an entirely different Ottoman state would have emerged. (p. 139) By the second half of the 14th century, sharing the religion of the ruler, i.e. Islam, facilitated advancement in the Ottoman administrative system. What is difficult to explain, the author says, is how a state, which possessed many elements of the high Islamic bureaucratic tradition, lacked the "parallel distinctions between a Muslim ruling elite and Christian subjects." (p. 136) The author explains this with a basic give-and-take relationship. The Ottomans needed manpower, and Christians needed security.

Four very helpful appendices at the end of the book provide the necessary raw data for buttressing several crucial arguments in the book. Appendix 1 is a summary of Chapter Three, and compares line-by-line Wittek's reading of the 1337 Bursa inscription with the author's own suggestions. Appendix 2, "Titles Used by the Ottoman Dynasty in the Fourteenth and Early-Fifteenth Century," is the starting point of the author's thesis built on the use of the title *malik*. Appendix 3, "Wives and Mothers of the Ottoman Dynasty in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Century," lists the ethnic origins of the mothers of the Ottoman sultans from Osman to Bayezid II. This table highlights the fact that most of the royal women in the Ottoman palace were of Christian origin. Appendix 4, "Provincial Governorships Held by Princes of the Ottoman Dynasty in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Century," is the basis of the argument that the Balkans were reserved for the great ruling families, such as the Mihaloğulları and Evrenesoğulları.

Recently, both Colin Heywood and Rudi Lindner pointed out the importance of the Mongol context in understanding the foundation of the Ottoman Empire. Rudi Lindner referred to the avoidance of 20th century scholars of the wider Mongolian context as *horror Tartarorum*. Based on numismatic evidence, he argued convincingly that the early Ottomans have to be considered a subordinate to the Ilkhanate.¹⁸ Colin Heywood stressed the connections with the Golden Horde through Noghay, a great-great-

¹⁸ Rudi P. Lindner, "How Mongol Were the Early Ottomans?" pp. 282-289.

grandson of Chinggis Khan. Lowry could have followed Lindner and Heywood's lead to develop his discussion on a crucial point in his book, i.e. the identity of Turahan, the fourth 'founder' of the Ottoman Empire, quoted by Lowry from Spandounes alongside with 17th century anonymous Greek chronicle. Unfortunately, this venue remains entirely unexplored.

The author applies the maxim *cuius regio eius religio* to early Ottoman history as though it were an axiomatic truth. (p. 129) Obviously, it is denuded of its own context, in which it does not refer to a conversion process, but to a legalization of confessional lines between Catholics and Lutherans after the Peace of Augsburg in 1555.¹⁹ However, this is exactly what the author is trying to avoid by rejecting the role of religion as a "fault line" between Christians and the Ottoman ruling elite. Be that as it may, one question still remains to be answered: Why did the Mongol khans, supreme rulers of the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Northern Black Sea in the 13th and 14th centuries, i.e. the period under review here, convert to Islam, the religion of their subjects, while the Christians of Bithynia and the Balkans converted to the same religion-though in this case professed by a petty warrior, Osman?²⁰ In this context, borrowing a Reformation formula and applying it to early Ottoman history is creating more problems than it would solve.

The author's definitions of "high Islam" and "Islamochristian syncretism" are rather vague and puzzling. For instance, he interprets Sheikh Bedreddin (p. 138-139) and the preacher in Bursa (?), who claimed that the prophets Muhammad and Jesus were equal in their prophethoods,

¹⁹ Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), p. 259.

²⁰ Among the Mongol khans who ruled in these regions, the following individuals converted to Islam: In the area of the Golden Horde the Jöchid khans Berke (r. 1257-1266) and Özbek Khan (r. 1313-1341), in Central Asia the Chaghatayid Tarmashirin (r. 1326-1334) and Tughluq Temür (r. 1347-1363), and in Iran the Toluid/Hülegüid Ahmad Tegüder (r. 1282-1284), Ghazan Khan (r. 1295-1304) and Öljeitü (r. 1304-1316).

(p. 137) as representatives of the Islamochristian synthesis, which flourished in Bithynia among Muslims and Christians. In this view, Sheikh Bedreddin and the revolt developed around his ideas and personality in 1416 stands for a clash between an increasingly high-Islamic colored Ottoman administration and the "Islamochristian syncretism" of the countryside. The recent scholarship on this issue demonstrated that Sheikh Bedreddin and his movement are to be considered as one of the millenarian mystic movements of the 13th and 14th centuries.²¹ While it is true that these movements were common both in Europe and the Middle East during this period, it is difficult to explain them with the interaction and cohabitation of the 'liberal-minded' Muslims and Christians.

It is unfortunate that a book addressing so many important issues is plagued with poorly defined terms and concepts, such as "Turco-Mongol tribal tradition of conquest and plunder," "predatory confederacy," "Islamochristian syncretism," "religious *ghazā* and secular *akın*." A good example is the "classical Islamic state model" and bureaucratic practices "as passed from the Abbasids to the Seljuks and Mongol Ilkhanids." (p. 135) Unfortunately, we are never told what the author really means with this all-encompassing categorization. The reader gains the impression that this term is used for a centralized state structure with Islam as the official state religion. The author argues that the inclusion of "the key Arab areas of Syria and Egypt" into the Ottoman Empire after 1517 caused a drastic change in the structure of the Ottoman ruling elite, and "many of these new Arab immigrants, schooled as they were in the administration of older Islamic societies ... found their way into all branches of the Ottoman bureaucracy." (p. 113) Furthermore, Lowry states that "there is a dynamism traceable in the Ottoman rule of fifteenth-century Christian peasants which is no longer discernible a century later." (p. 114) One might ask here, why should we assume that Syrians and Iraqis, representatives of so-called "older Islamic societies," preserved the

²¹ For a general overview and the relevant primary and secondary literature, see Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Zındıklar ve Mülhidler (15.-17. Yüzyıllar)*. (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998), pp. 136-202.

classical Islamic administrative practices, but the Ottomans, who were, according to the author, well versed in the Seljukid administrative practices, did not? Moreover, why should we assume that the "Arabs," who were trained in the Mamluk administration, would not cohabitate with non-Muslims in the Ottoman system, as they did with the Mamluk ruling elite, who were also converts to Islam? Above all, how can we justify the idea that the Arabs inherited some administrative and political practices of earlier periods just because they were Arabs? One can multiply the questions, but none of them is relevant for the institutional transformation that the Ottoman State underwent after the 15th century. Certainly the Ottoman conquest of Syria and Egypt influenced and changed the color of the Ottoman imperial discourse, and necessitated new legitimization models, but seeing this as an inherently conservative process is an overly simplistic, if not outright flawed approach: The very "change" and thus dynamism with which a largely Islamic discourse was adopted in the 16th century is the exact opposite of the stagnation and decline Lowry claims to observe. It is almost customary among some Ottoman historians to attribute whatever they do not see fitting to their own framework to the ancient Near Eastern, classical Islamic, or old Turkish traditions, because the Ottomans (like all other 'Orientals') cannot innovate, but they just repeat whatever they inherited from the more intelligent and creative predecessors. The institutional and administrative complexity of the Ottoman Empire (along with other empires founded in the 16th century, such as the Safavids and Mughals) is certainly unprecedented, and labeling it as just the "classical Islamic state model," is an inadmissible overgeneralization.

The author rightly emphasizes that the early Ottoman administrative system was a culmination of different power-sharing networks. As mentioned above, the network of different warrior families was an important dimension of this system. However, defining the whole historical process exclusively along the axis of the Ottoman family versus warrior families, be they Christian or Muslim, does certainly not convey the whole picture, as it ignores several other groups who wielded significant political and intellectual power. For example, Sufi dervishes

who had just started to be organized around certain lineages and practices, and *futuwwa* or *akhi* groups, whose presence and role in 14th century Anatolia were described by the traveler Ibn Battūta with lively examples, are certainly to be considered as partners to authority, and their role in the formation of the Ottoman Empire needs to be defined alongside with that of the warrior families.²² Therefore, the book under review here should be read as a preliminary description of only one power-sharing network, not as an exhaustive analysis of the Ottoman polity.

On the editorial side, the book is full of typological errors and misprints from beginning to end. Sometimes one misspelling is repeated over and over. For example, the title of Chapter Seven, "The Last Phase of Ottoman Syncretism," is written as "The Last Place of Ottoman Syncretism" in the heading throughout the chapter. The following are but the most blatant examples of poor editorial workmanship throughout the book: *Ozel* (p. ix; Özel), *Silay* (p. ix; Silay), *Mamluke* (p. 29; Mameluke or Mamlūk), *unvan* (p. 35; ünvan), *al mujāhid* (p. 35; al-mujāhid), *fi sebīlī-llah* and *fi sabīl Allāh* (p. 20, 35; fī sabīl Allāh), *al ghuzāt* (p. 35; al-ghuzāt), *Aydin* (p. 37; Aydın), *al-'arab wa'l-'ajam* (p. 42; al-'arab wa'l-'ajam), *kılıc-ıyla* (p. 49; kılıcıyla), *şerīfīnde* (p. 53; şerīfīnde), *atlı* (p. 51; atlu), *Arvavud'ün* (p. 53; Arnavud'uñ), *anlarūn* (p. 53; anlaruñ), *akıncı* (p. 59; akıncı), *Irene Melikoff* (p. 57, 59-60, 184; Irène Mélikoff), *hadji* (p. 60; Hādjdjī, or Hājī, or just Hacı), *min Dārī l-fana ila Dar-i l-baqa* (p. 61, min Dār al-baqā' ilā Dar al-fanā, or min Dārī'l-baqā' ilā Dārī'l-fanā'), *Maliku l-guzat wa-l-mujahidīn* (p. 61, malik al-ghuzāt wa al-mujāhidīn or maliku'l-ghuzāt wa'l-mujāhidīn), *gharī'bān* (p. 73; gharībān), *amir a'zam* (p. 87; al-amir al-a'zam), *al-'adl* (p. 87; al-'adl), *sultan bin sultan* (p. 87; sultan ibn al-sultan), *İzahili Osmanli* (p. 122, İzahlı Osmanlı), *beylerleys* (p. 141; beylerbeys), *Rise of Ottoman Empire* (p. 159; The Rise of the Ottoman Empire), *Sūrat* (p. 162; Sure or Sūra), *Ahval-il*, (p. 168, Ahval-i), *Manner* (p. 186, Männer). On page 73,

²² For a similar discussion in the Chaghatayid context, which is contemporary to the early Ottomans, see Jürgen Paul, "Scheiche und Herrscher im Khanat Čagatay." *Der Islam* 67(1990): 278-321.

hānegāh and *hānegāh*, i.e. hospice, are actually the same word in two different transcription systems. Ahmed Tevhid's famous article on the Bursa inscription was published in 1914, not in 1912. Apparently the author considered 1330, the original publication year, as a lunar year, but it is a solar year and should be converted from the Ottoman solar calendar. There is no need to transcribe Turkish final (i or ı) as a long vowel, unless it is an adjectival suffix. Thus, Evrenosoğulları, Savcı, or akıncı; not *Savcı* (p. 40), *Evrenosoğulları* (p. 60), and *akıncı* (p. 66). All these typological errors could have been corrected with a little bit more attention (on the side of editors as well as the author) without much effort. One can only hope that these errors would be eliminated in any future edition.

However, the responsibility of some problems, such as careless transcription, should go directly to the author. The author is to be commended for including the originals of some important inscriptions and documents in his book, thus making them available for other scholars who may wish to pursue similar questions. But, as the above examples show, several transcription systems are used here side by side in such an inconsistent and careless manner that it is almost impossible to use these texts as they are presented here. First, the author did not include a transcription table, as is academic practice. He presents transcriptions of texts from Ottoman Turkish, Arabic and Persian, but it is impossible to know which system he is applying for these transcriptions. For example, the transcription systems used to render two Arabic documents, i.e. the 1337 inscription (p. 36), and the 1417 Yenice Vardar tombstone of Gazi Evrenos (p. 61), are entirely different from each other. In the first instance, long vowels are indicated, but in the second all diacritical marks are simply omitted. A pedigree line, such as *Urkhān bin-i 'Uthmān, Bint-i 'Abdullah* (p. 93) is unacceptable in modern transcription methods. In the common practice *bin* (son of) is abbreviated as (*b.*), but a form like *bin-i* or *bint-i* does not exist in any language, let alone in any transcription system. Thus, it should be corrected as *Urkhān b. 'Uthmān* and *bt. 'Abdullāh*.

Lack of attention to the transcription created some inconceivable results. For example, one can say many things, good or bad, about Timur,

but to my knowledge, at least, nobody called him *Timur Han korkan* (p. 150, *lit.* frightened [?] Timur Khan). The title at stake here is *küregen*, i.e. son-in-law, not *korkan*. Although the author puts so much emphasis on the use of titles, it is surprising that he did not recognize one of the most important titles in the 15th century Islamic political discourse.²³ These are unacceptable in a book claiming to return to the sources in order to present fresh interpretations.

Despite its ambitious planning, the book under review is not well-executed. The fundamental flaw of the book is the equation of Wittek's thesis with the overall historical and historiographical questions on the emergence of the Ottoman Empire. Hence, the book swings between criticizing Wittek and solving the complex problems of early Ottoman history. These two are certainly related, but not identical, and deserve a more comprehensive analysis, beginning with a more carefully executed approach to the sources.

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²³ For further references, see Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen*. (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1963), vol. I, pp. 475-477 (§340). For the place of the title *küregen* in the Timurid political discourse, see Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty," *Iranian Studies* 21 (1988): p. 110.

“Χορός of light”:

VISION OF THE SACRED IN PAULUS THE SILENTIARY'S POEM *DESCRIPTIO S. SOPHIAE*

The description of the illumination of the church is perhaps the most dramatic sequence in Paulus the Silentary's poem-*ekphrasis* dedicated to Hagia Sophia of Constantinople. Yet scholars in Byzantine studies have shown very little interest in this part of the poem. Unlike the rest of the poetical description of the imperial church, the stanzas devoted to lighting (806-920) provide little, if any, material evidence; they cannot be clearly substantiated from an archaeological point of view, which could explain why they are so neglected. The only close reading of this part of the poem, which eventually led to some sort of reconstitution of Byzantine lighting devices, is to be found in W. R. Lethaby & Harold Swainson's book from 1894.¹ Recently, in their study on the construction of *ekphrasis*, Macrides and Magdalino² have pointed out the limits of a positivistic approach to the poem, and have ascertained the spiritual structure of the text.³ In their view, the search for a particular context of the poem is futile, its 'timelessness' being a function of its 'topicality'.⁴

¹ W. R. Lethaby & Harold Swainson, *The Church of Sancta Sophia A Study of Byzantine Building* (Macmillan & Co. London & New York, 1894), pp. 110-121.

² Ruth Macrides and Paul Magdalino, 'The architecture of *ekphrasis*: construction and context of Paul the Silentary's poem on Hagia Sophia', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies (BMGS)* 12 (1988).

³ Ruth Macrides and Paul Magdalino, p. 60

⁴ Ruth Macrides and Paul Magdalino, p. 82.

However, in discussing the illumination of the church, the authors are primarily concerned with identifying the liturgical moment described by the poet. In my view, Paul's 'timelessness' may as well be related to contemporary Byzantine vision. The poem provides new concepts that may help define the Byzantine vision of the divine. The problem of 'mystic viewing' and vision of the divine was applied by Jaś Elsner to the mosaics in the apse of the monastery of St. Catherine at Mt Sinai, the other Justinian foundation from the 6th c. where divine light was a central theme.⁵ This paper aims to bring its contribution in the same direction, trying to reconstitute and to identify new concepts of the Byzantine aesthetics of light and vision of the divine from Justinian's time.

The poem of Paulus the Silentiary was an imperial oration commissioned by Justinian and recited in front of a selected audience of official dignitaries on the occasion of the second consecration of the imperial church – perhaps on the Feast of Epiphany (6th January 563).⁶ The level of the audience can be sensed in the quality of the language of the poem, the use of a very learned idiom in the Alexandrian tradition. Therefore the poem deserves to be examined not only as a source of historical and archeological information, but also as a valuable source of aesthetic theory and as a literary piece.⁷ Paul's vocabulary reflects attachment to classical past that the poet adjusts to a Christian mode of thinking. In this respect, Mary Whitby is right to define Paul's poem as 'the end of an era, the last in line of classical Greek epics'.⁸ As I hope to demonstrate later, Paul blends classical patterns of thinking with his own aesthetic experience of the divine, sometimes mystical in its expression. Before starting the

⁵ Jaś Elsner, 'Viewing and the Sacred: Pagan, Christian and The Vision of God', *Art and the Roman Viewer. The Transformation of Art from the Pagan World to Christianity* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 88-124.

⁶ Mary Whitby, 'The Occasion of Paul the Silentiary's Ekphrasis of S. Sophia', *Classical Quarterly* 35 (i) (1985), 216.

⁷ Whitby, 215.

⁸ Whitby, 219.

actual analysis of the text, I should make a brief review of Paul's poetical description of the illumination of the church (806-920).⁹

The description starts with the spectacular image of the long twisted chains of brass, hanged from special hooks placed along the cornice of the dome, from where they fall down to the ground. Before reaching the floor, their path forms a choir in unison¹⁰ (καὶ χορὸν ἐκτέλεουσιν ὁμόγνιον) (818) and silver discs are attached to each chain, suspended 'circle-wise' in the air. In their lofty course, the chains float in a circle above the heads of men: 'Thus hangs the circling choir of bright lights (Εὐσελάων δέ κύκλιος ἐκ φαέων χορὸς ἵσταται). You might say you were gazing on the effulgent stars of the heavenly Corona close to Arcturus and the head of Draco' (830-833). A myriad of lamps are attached along the circumference of the imperial dome, so that the base of the dome may not be left without light. The dome appears thus as if lit by a 'nocturnal sun' around its cornice. With its multitude of lights, it looks in the night like most precious jewellery, although not an ordinary ornament. Quite the contrary, the vision of the lit dome is like a golden chain 'glowing like fire' – the jewellery of a virgin, the emperor's daughter – a metaphor of the city of Constantinople:¹¹ 'Just as a king, cherishing his virgin daughter, might place round her neck a lovely chain glowing like fire with rubies set in gold, so has our Emperor fixed round the cornice a revolving circle of lights that run along the whole base' (866-870).

⁹ I use the text of Paulus Silentarius, *Descr. S. Sophiae* in the English translation of C. Mango, in *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453 Sources and Documents* (Toronto, 1986), pp. 80-96, complemented on some occasions by the French translation of Marie-Christine Fayant and Pierre Chuvin (editions A Die, 1997), and by my own translation, when specified.

¹⁰ Mango translates 'even choir', Marie-Christine Fayant translates 'une ronde de soeurs'. I take the term 'unison' from Lethaby's translation, which I find more close to the Greek ὁμόγνιον.

¹¹ Ruth Macrides and Paul Magdalino, 70.

In spite of his 'baroque'¹² phrase, Paul is consistent and quite precise in defining the conceptual path of the movement of light. In his description, light revolves in concentric circles unfolding in a choral pattern. The circles of light are disposed so that in the middle of a larger circle there is a crown with a light-bearing rim, and in the center another circle spreading its light out. The evening choir of light unfolds in a pattern of circles increasingly wider until night is compelled to flee: 'Thus the evening light revolves round the temple, brightly shining. And in the smaller, inner circle you will find a second crown bearing lights along its rim, while in the very centre another noble disc rises shining in the air, so that darkness is made to flee' (834-38). The concentric circles hanging on twisted chains revolve round the temple, but this movement does not permit things to be dispersed; instead, the space preserves an 'ever-changing aspect contained within itself' (884). To describe the circular movement of light a nuanced vocabulary is used, which puts the modern translator in difficulty.¹³ One particular term is interesting for this analysis, the *χορός*, which is used four times in the description of the illumination (verses 818, 831, 890) and once in the description of the ambo (verse 46).

The term *χορός* derives from the verb *χορευῶ*, which in English may be translated 'chorus' or 'choir', 'round dance' or 'dance in circle', 'choral movement' or simply 'dance' on some occasions, it can mean the group performing the dance. The complexity of the term exceeds by far any of these modern terms of translation given above. To sum up the meaning of the term, one may say that *χορός* can be understood as referring to a collective coordinated movement in orderly, circular disposition. *Χορός* can mean both the movement (dance in circle) and the group performing the movement.

¹² P. Friedländer, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentarius* (Leipzig/Berlin 1912), p. 124.

¹³ Marie-Christine Fayant, 'De la description au panégyrique Un art au service du pouvoir', in *Paul le Silentiaire*, traduction de Marie-Christine Fayant et Pierre Chuvin, p. 43.

Paradigmatic for the choral movement are the dancing movements of the gods described in Plato's fortunate choir (*ευδαίμονι χορῶ*).¹⁴ These dancing movements of gods, says Plato, take a pattern of 'juxtapositions and back-circlings and advances of their circular courses on themselves'.¹⁵ This kind of movement is a *topos* in Platonism and Neoplatonism in the description of celestial bodies. Thus, Plotinus (205-270 CE) describes the creation of the world as an emanation of luminous source, the great light self-centered, around which many other circles of light increasingly wider move outwardly from the center: 'There is, we may put it, something that is center; about it, a circle of light shed from it; round center and first circle alike, another circle, light from light; outside that again, not another circle of light but one which, lacking light of its own, must borrow. ...Thus all begins with the great light, shining self-centred; in accordance with the reigning plan (that of emanation) this gives forth its brilliance'.¹⁶ Plotinus calls this movement a divine dance (*χορεία ενθεου*).¹⁷ The concept *χορός* is adopted and transformed by Christianity,¹⁸ and at the same time continues to inspire the

¹⁴ Plato, *Phaedrus* 250b.

¹⁵ Plato, *Timaeus* 40d.

¹⁶ Plotinus, *The Enneads* IV. 3. 17, translated by Stephen MacKenna (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1969), p. 274.

¹⁷ Plotinus, *The Enneads* VI, 9. 8-9. 9. Plotinus with an English translation by A. H. Armstrong (London: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 335.

¹⁸ *Χορος* is to be found in the mystical writings of the Church Fathers, for example in Gregory of Nyssa (*In Inscriptiones Psalmorum; De la virginité*, SC 119. In *Psalm*.VI 44, 508 B) and Gregory of Nazianzens, 'Oratio 28: On the Doctrine of God', *Faith Gives Fullness to Reasoning. The Five Theological Orations of Gregory Nazianzen*, Introduction and Commentary by Frederick W. Norris, Translation by Lionel Wickham and Frederick Williams (E. J. Brill, Leiden. New York. København. Köln, 1991), p. 244. One should stress that in spite of significant theological differences between Christian theology and pagan philosophy, the Christian writers found in the world of philosophy, particularly the philosophical theology of Neoplatonism, a language and a mode of thinking that could be adjusted to Christian teaching. A specific iconography of the Byzantine *χορος* could be also

Neoplatonists; among them, a notable figure was Proclus (412-485 CE), a generation before Paul.

The meaning of the concept *χορός* used by Paul can be better understood if one tries to reconstitute the intellectual world in which he wrote his poem. It is important to consider that the late 5th and early 6th centuries were times of active philosophical development and it is around this time that the Dionysian corpus emerged. Among the Neoplatonic thinkers of this time, Proclus was a dominant figure, who presumably inspired Pseudo-Dionysius. For Proclus, *χορός* or the choir of dance circularly evolving around the *coryphée* was a central concept; it was a synthesis of the functions that constructs the whole universe. In his philosophical system, the soul is compared with a circle whose centre is the spirit, whereas the spirit itself becomes a circle with its own centre in relation with the Good. As a result, the divine choir of dance can be construed as a multitude of concentric circles. The disposition of movement follows the Platonic and Neo-Platonic path of 'progression-return', consisting in the progressively diminishing radiation of circles of light from the One, the source in which they have their beings and the goal to which they return. The same model is to be found in Pseudo-Dionysius. His description of heavenly bodies reveals the Neoplatonic mindset, especially Proclean, following the divine pattern revolving around God as the cause, source and destiny of all creation: 'This, so far as I know, is the first rank of heavenly beings. It circles (*κύκλω θεου*) in immediate proximity to God. Simply and ceaselessly it dances around (*περιχορεύουσα*) an eternal knowledge of him. It is forever and totally thus, as befits angels' (212 A).¹⁹ According to Pseudo-

identified, which makes the object of research in my present project "Chorós: The Making of Sacred Space in Byzantium," supported by a financial grant from Statens Humanistiske Forskningsråd, Denmark.

¹⁹ De Coelesti Hierarchia 212 A, *Corpus Dionysiacum II Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita*, Günter Heil and Adolf Martin Ritter, Walter de Gruyter (Berlin New York, 1991), p. 31. *Pseudo-Dionysius The Complete Works*, Translation by Colm Luibheid, foreword, notes and translation collaboration by Paul

Dionysius, the first rank of heavenly beings is the 'cherubim', whose name means 'fullness of knowledge' or 'outpouring of wisdom',²⁰ and the 'seraphim' whose name signifies fiery. Because they are in such close proximity to God they are 'filled with the first of all light', 'of utter purification, of infinite light',²¹ and with 'divine nourishment which is abundant'.²² Paul's description of the illumination of the church shows familiarity with this kind of thinking.

In the following, I would like to show that the vision of light was for Paul an organic part of the perception of space as a whole, in which the beholder experienced his vision. The architectural forms emerge as if created by a 'point in motion',²³ where motion tends to be predominantly circular; the circle and the curve are the dominant forms. Synthronon, the sacrosanct point of the sanctuary, where the priestly seats are located, displays a pattern of ever-revolving circles: 'the lowest part of them is drawn close together round a center on the ground, but as they rise, they widen out little by little until they reach the stalls of silver, and so in ever-increasing circles they wheel round the curved wall that stands above them' (364-68). The conches (the lateral parts of the sanctuary), which according to the poet derive their name from the shell of the sea, suggest the coiling movement of the apse – a metaphor that can be found also in Plotinus: 'it is the motion of coiling about, with ceaseless return upon the same path – in other words, it is circuit'; 'it must still take the circular course by its indwelling nature; for it seeks the straight path onwards but finds no space and is driven back so that it recoils on the only course left to it: there is nothing beyond'.²⁴ The lighting of the iconostasis takes too

Rorem (SPCK.London, 1987), p. 165. The same is found in Is. 6:2 and Rev. 4:4.

²⁰ Pseudo-Dionysius, *De Coelesti Hierarchia* (PD, CH), *op. cit.*, p. 162.

²¹ PD, CH 209C, p. 165.

²² PD, CH 212A, p. 165.

²³ Ruth Webb, 'The Aesthetics of Sacred Space: Narrative, Metaphor, and Motion in Ekphraseis of Church Buildings', *DOP* 53 (1999), 68.

²⁴ *The Enneads* IV. 4. 16 and II. 2. 1.

a circular disposition: 'Pointed at the summit, they (the silver columns) are ringed by circles that gradually widen down to the lowest curve that surrounds the base of the trunk' (871-879). Finally, the upper part of the sacred space of Hagia Sophia, the dome winds its circular curves outwardly: 'A stone rim, rounded on all sides, has been fastened upon the backs (of the arches), where the base of the hemisphere comes down; there, too, are the winding curves of the last circle which the workmen have set like a crown upon the backs of the arches' (481-86). These examples demonstrate that in describing both architectural space and the lighting of the church the poet appeals to common patterns and concepts. This may explain why the same word 'choir' comes to define also the space of the bema and the two lateral conches.²⁵ Paul's text could be a point of origin or at least an important link in a long process of transformation and definition of terms, which reflects a most articulated conception of the Byzantine space, in which choral movement (*χορός*) and sacred space (*χόρος*) are intimately related. This conception grants vision a remarkable unity. Vision itself becomes curvilinear.

Vision generates a sort of vertigo on the audience. But the vision of Hagia Sophia is not a mere effect on the viewer's senses, the result of some sort of mechanical motion of the viewer, or the dynamics of the architectural forms. In my opinion, the characteristic of Paul's *ekphrasis* stands not in the 'vividness' of his language, in opposing dynamic to static description, which defined the old *ekphrasises*.²⁶

²⁵ I would like to take up Friedländer's observation (P. Friedländer, *op.cit.*, p. 293-4) about the term *χοροστάσις* used by Paul (890), which he relates to the name and function of the future presbyterium ('the choir which stands up'). In my view, the term not only reflects the liturgical function of the space and the position of the singers (the choir), but it points toward the meaning itself of that space, which derives from the movement of light, conceptually defined by Paul. This most sacred part of the architecture comes to be apparently a moment of *stasis* of that circular movement (*χορός*). One can say that architecture becomes a frozen moment of the *χορός*, its petrified state in the visible.

²⁶ Ruth Webb, 69.

Rather, the power of his poetical discourse consists in conceptually articulating this dynamics that seems to pervade the entire poem. An important contribution in this respect has the concept *χορός* – the same term that describes the motion of the heavenly beings, as well as of the stars. In Paul's vision, the church itself is perceived as the cosmos, so that by looking at the church one can reach up to 'the great circle of heaven itself'.²⁷

Looking into the particular genre of *ekphraseis* of sacred buildings, it is now possible to reconstruct a 'new theory and practice of ecclesiastical architecture', which perceived 'the church as a model of heaven on earth'.²⁸ One particular aspect is consistently present in all these descriptions, which may be seen as a key ingredient of this theological model of representation and vision. Thus, authors like Procopius, Paul the Silentiary, Chorikios, and Photios systematically ascribe a sort of vertige, a whirling, swinging movement to vision experienced in these sacred spaces. 'It is a miracle in perpetual *whirling* (my emphasis) that you are going to contemplate' (399), writes Paul the Silentiary, prompting his audience before starting to unfold the vision of the sanctuary of Hagia Sophia. Likewise, in Procopius' description of the imperial church, a bewildering sight of plans constantly shifting around, of elements retreating and receding, generates an unrested vision. The columns arranged on either side of the sanctuary 'do not stand in a straight line, but they retreat inward in the pattern of the semicircle (*hēmikyklon*) as if they were yielding to one another in a choral dance (*ἐν χορῳ ἀλλήλοις υπεξισταμενοι*)'.²⁹ The pattern of the dancing columns is to be found again as late as 12th c. in the *ekphrasis* of Hagia Sophia, where some columns move 'as it were in a dancing fashion (*χορευτικῶς*) inclining towards each other on a circle' and

²⁷ Macrides and Magdalino, 57.

²⁸ Macrides and Magdalino, 79.

²⁹ Procopius, *Buildings* I, 34, with an English translation by H. B. Dewing (Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 18, 19.

'stoas dancing in a circle (κύκλω χορεύοντας στοάς).'³⁰ The author describes the process itself of coming-to-be of the church as circular, like a dance where 'each arch desires to be bent into the form of a circle, and to join with the nearest one', by which 'this work of art imitates the whole universe'.³¹ A much-quoted description is that of the Virgin Pharos in Constantinople by Photius, who describes the emotional impression of this event on the beholder from the consecration of the church:

'But when with difficulty one has torn oneself away from there and looked into the church itself, with what joy and trepidation and astonishment is one filled! It is as if one had entered heaven itself with no one barring the way from any side, and was illuminated by the beauty in all forms shining all around like so many stars, so is one utterly amazed. Thenceforth it seems that everything is in ecstatic motion, and the church itself is *circling round*.³² For the spectator, through his *whirling about*³³ in all directions and being constantly astir, which he is forced to experience by the variegated spectacle on all sides, imagines that his personal condition is transferred to the object'.³⁴

In these descriptions of sacred buildings, image and space fuse together in a single vision, a spectacular sight in which everything moves spinning round.³⁵ It is my contention that, rather than to be seen as mere effect of language or movement of the beholder in

³⁰ Cyril Mango and John Parker, 'A Twelfth-Century Description of St. Sophia', *DOP* 14 (1960), 238, 240.

³¹ Cyril Mango and John Parker, 239.

³² My emphasis.

³³ My emphasis.

³⁴ C. Mango, 'The Church of the Virgin of the Pharos', Photius, Homil. X, 4ff, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453*, p. 185.

³⁵ See my article 'The Dance of Adam: Reconstructing the Byzantine Χορός', *Byzantinoslavica* 18 (2003), 179-204.

space, such a vision transcribes a visual event whose ground and source is liturgical.

As concerns Paul's vision, we still don't know exactly how the actual lighting devices in the time of Justinian and of the composition of the poem looked like. In Lethaby's reconstruction,³⁶ some of these lighting devices may have looked like the *χορός* or the *polyeleos*, still in use today in some Greek, Athonite and Serbian churches, swinging about during the chant of the *polyeleos*, the Cherubic, and the Trisagion, or on the great feasts of the year, presumably caring out an old tradition. According to one description given by Lethaby, after the corona (presumably the *χορός*) under the dome has been lighted, the monks fetched long poles with which they pushed it out to the full extent that the chains permitted, and the result was that 'in a few minutes the whole church was filled with slowly swinging lights'.³⁷ Such liturgical practice, still in use today, brings back Photios' description evoked above. The swinging of the *χορός* during the Cheroubic can be no doubt derived from Pseudo-Dionysus' description of the cherubim dancing around in immediate proximity to God, and it is my assumption that this source enables us to trace back the liturgical source of these lighting devices, possibly used in the imperial church during Justinian. It is most probable that the Byzantine iconography of light intensively cultivated during his reign, can be also connected to the emergence of the Cheroubic hymn itself, which has been apparently composed around 6th c.³⁸ The choir

³⁶ W. R. Lethaby & Harold Swainson, pp. 110-121.

³⁷ A. Riley, *Mountain of the Monks*, apud. W. R. Lethaby & Harold Swainson, p. 119.

³⁸ According to the eleventh-century historian, Kedrenos, the Cheroubic or "mystic" hymn is a sixth-century addition to the Byzantine liturgy, in the early years of Justin II: 573/574. In his paper 'Der Kaiser im Geleit Gottes. Der Grosse Einzug und die Stellung des christlichen Kaiser in der Spätantike', *Castrum Peregrini* 247-249 (Amsterdam 2001), Prof. Wolfgang Christian Schneider suggests that the hymn is older - and that it probably was a part of the consecration-ceremonial of the Hagia Sophia 562. He

of light described by Paul in stanza 834-38 seems to reflect these new liturgical and iconographical elaborations, in which the old paradigm of the circling beings round God from Proclus, Plotinus and Pseudo-Dionysius was echoed. At the same time, a mystical dimension was inherent to these visions, similar in some respects to the mystic experience described by Plotinus. The similarity can be perceived in connection with two aspects of the problem that will be further discussed. First, vision of the divine takes a whirling movement, like the god-inspired dance (*χορείαν ενθεον*) performed around him in Plotinus (*The Enneads* VI, 9, 8-9); secondly, vision as mystic union between the beholder and the divine, which is described as a state of joy, finally leads to rest. In the following, I will show how the conceptual frame of this 'whirling' vision is shaped in Paul's poem by the use of the Platonic notions of procession-return, specific to the Christian Neo-Platonism of Pseudo-Dionysius.

Analysing the order of description followed by Paul, Macrides and Magdalino come to the conclusion that the poet recreates for his audience the actual process by which the imperial church had come to being.³⁹ Macrides and Magdalino's interpretation is persuasive. There is however one aspect in Paul's narrative that I suggest to be taken up for further interpretation. Paul starts his description with the oriental part and the apses, moves to the western part, but suddenly his discourse becomes emphatic and returns to the central space of the church and the dome. He then continues his description of the rest of the building. With a rhetorical call, which is in my view more significative than just a 'ritual exclamation',⁴⁰ the poet extols the audience to return to the central part. He does it with a syncopate movement of the phrase, purposely made, by which he does not only

thinks that the five citations of 'merimna' (deposing the merimnai) in the poem of Paulus Silentarius refer to the deposing of the 'merimna' in the Cheroubikon. I also think that the live utterance of Paul's poem marks a crucial moment in its composition.

³⁹ Macrides and Magdalino, 58-59.

⁴⁰ Macrides and Magdalino, 59.

point out to a specific location in space, but he does it in a manner that stirs up the attention of the audience: 'Whither am I driven? What wind, as upon the sea, has carried away my roaming speech? The center of the church, the most glorious place (*χᾶρον ὑπερκύδαντα*), has been neglected. *Return*, my song, to behold a wonder scarcely to be believed when seen or heard' (444-47). With this figure of speech, the discourse takes a forceful turn, a sudden return to the most important place. In doing so, Paul reiterates a mystical gesture, and reflects a theological pattern of thinking.

One can perceive in this movement certain reliance upon Pseudo-Dionysius' notions of 'procession and return', a Platonic and Neoplatonic⁴¹ twofold structure that provides the framework for his theological method and cosmology: "To those who fall away it is the voice calling, "Come back!" and it is the power which raises them up again. It refurbishes and restores the image of God corrupted within them. It is the sacred stability which is there for them when the tide of unholiness is tossing them about. It is safety for those who made a stand. It is the guide bringing upward those uplifted to it and is the enlightenment of the illuminated. Source of perfection for those being made perfect, source of divinity for those being deified, principle of simplicity for those turning toward simplicity, point of unity for those made one; transcendently, beyond what is, it is the Source of every source' (The Divine Names, p. 51; 589C). What Pseudo-Dionysius meant by this call back was the urge to restore the unity lost by falling-out from the One; the radiation from the One is countered by an inherent longing for the return to the original source and the state of unity. In Chapter Seven of The Divine Names, concerning Wisdom, Mind, Word, Truth, Faith, Pseudo-Dionysius gives an account on 'the good and eternal Life for being wise, for being the principle of wisdom'. He says 'the divine Wisdom knows all things by knowing itself'. 'The divine Mind does not acquire the knowledge of things from things. Rather, of itself and in itself it pre-

⁴¹ "The sun of that sphere – let us return to it as our example – is an Intellectual Principle'. (*The Enneads*, IV. 3. 11)

contains and comprehends the awareness and understanding and being everything in terms of their cause'. 'God knows all things, not by understanding things, but by understanding himself'. (108-109). Divine Wisdom knows all things by knowing itself, not by understanding things, but by understanding itself; not by spreading itself outwardly, but by coming close to itself, in that which concern containment and comprehension. Self-reflexivity and self-containment are attributes of the Divine Wisdom. The principle of Sophia is the principle of return into oneself. What defines it is a special kind of motility, a revolving movement that evokes the coiling of the conch. This movement is paradigmatic of the Divine Wisdom.

The structure of the poem reflects, in my view, the thinking that, similarly to the divine beings, the *ekphrasis* of the sacred building should not lose its track, it must not spread itself outwardly, but should return to the navel source (*omphalos*).⁴² In my interpretation, the vision described by Paul is that of a building construed after the principle of the Divine Wisdom, which can be viewed as a space turning inwardly. About the Divine Wisdom, Pseudo-Dionysius says that it knows things by knowing only itself, not spreading itself outwardly but looking inwards for a gathering in itself. Likewise, the course of the poem partakes of this mystical path, which can be seen as a property of the text and a conceptual frame of the 'progression' of elements or the 'spiritual structure' (cyclical and anagogical) of the poem of which Makrides and Magdalino speak.⁴³ Paul's Hagia Sophia is, in my view, such a self-reflecting space of the Divine Sophia. The description of the illumination of the church enhances this perception. The multitude of lights, hanging on twisted chains give the space of Hagia Sophia an 'ever-changing aspect contained within itself'. The contemplation of this vision, says Paul, can only inspire love (304). It brings joy in the beholder's eye and puts his/her

⁴² This figure of speech of emphatic return of the discourse can be found again in the 12th c. *ekphrasis* of Hagia Sophia.

⁴³ Macrides and Magdalino, 59-60.

soul at rest. Here we approach the last stage of mystic vision, that is, mystic union between the divine and the faithful. This union puts his/her soul at rest.

The soul of whoever gazes on light, says Paul, feels his heart warmed with joy, he rejoices at the simple look of the celestial image of Christ: 'And whoever gazes on the lighted trees, with their crown of circles (the choir), feels his heart warmed with joy; and looking on a boat (nacelle) swathed with fire (*πυρισπείρητον ἐπακτρίδα*), or some single lamp, or the symbol of the Divine Christ, all care vanishes from the mind' (890-894).⁴⁴ The poem ends with the eschatological image of the church as the divine light of hope and salvation which guides humanity (916-920). Pendant to this image is another one, the image of the emperor, the light on which anyone in the empire, from the east to the west, can rest his/her care (921-33). Byzantine *ekphraseis* of Hagia Sophia,⁴⁵ as well as of other sacred buildings, depict in similar terms their visions and the effect upon the beholder, which might be perceived as a general scheme at work used by the authors to describe religious sites. One finds in the Wisdom of Solomon the impression made on the faithful of the space of the church: 'When I enter my house, I shall find rest with her, for companionship with her has no bitterness, and life with her has no pain, but gladness and joy' (8.16). The Divine Sophia imparts joy and rest to the soul. Similar is Plotinus' language.⁴⁶ It is also for this 'love-inspiring sight' that Paul raises his prayer like a true mystic at the end of his poem, and thus ends Paul's vision.

The prayer that ends the poem reinforces the mystic perception of the text. Paul ends his grand imperial encomium with a very short prayer. For its brevity, the definition of the Holy Trinity is

⁴⁴ My translation.

⁴⁵ On entering the church Photios describes it as 'a new miracle and a joy to see'.

⁴⁶ 'When we do look to him, then we are at our goal and at rest and do not sing out of tune as we truly dance our god-inspired dance (*χορείαν ενθεον*) around him'. (Plotinus, *Enneads* VI, 9. 8-9. 9)

remarkably nuanced. He describes it as 'unspotted' and 'brilliant' (παμφαῆς ἀχραντου τριαδος), a terminology used by Pseudo-Dionysius to describe the heavenly beings.⁴⁷ We do not know whether Paul knew Dionysius's corpus of texts, nor do we know what was the general perception of this mystic at Constantinople in 6th c., except the official position of the bishop Hypathius and his reluctance toward the use of the text by the Monophysite party.⁴⁸ Whether the Areopagite was viewed as a late 5th c. compiler or as the real disciple of St. Paul we don't know for sure. But what is viewed as Dionysius' writings, as well as the whole intellectual world of Neoplatonism from the 5th and 6th centuries, has certainly had a significant impact on Paul's poem. Following Lossky's view, Andrew Louth notes that all educated men of the 5th and 6th centuries, Christian and pagan, 'shared a culture,' although the Areopagite's spirituality was distinctively Christian.⁴⁹ It is this context that provides the main clues for the understanding of Paul's poem, particularly of his vision of light.

Paul ends his poem with a prayer as the priest marks the end of the liturgy reciting from the back of the ambo the prayer *opisthambônōs euchē*. This prayer, recited by the priest with the face towards the west, it was said to be the conclusion of the liturgy, the compendium of those prayers previously uttered in the sanctuary.⁵⁰ Likewise,

⁴⁷ PD speaking about the angel as 'an image of God', a manifestation of the hidden light, a mirror, pure, bright, untarnished, unspotted (ἀχραντος) (DN ch IV 22); 'I would claim that the angelic gifts bestowed on them have never been changed inherently, that in fact they are brilliantly complete' (DN IV 23); 'This is why, says PD, the sacred theologians frequently describe the transcendent and shapeless Being as fiery. It lights up everything (παμφαῆς) and remains hidden at the same time'. (CH Ch. XV. 2)

⁴⁸ Mansi, *Concilia*, t. VIII, col. 821, apud. E.-H. Vollet, art. in *La grande encyclopédie*, tome XIV, p. 148.

⁴⁹ Andrew Louth, *Denys the Areopagite* (Wilton: Morehouse-Barlow, 1989), pp. 23-24.

⁵⁰ Lethaby & Swainson, p. 53.

almost in a priestly manner, the poet concludes his poem. Two other poets of 6th c. end their poems dedicated to the churches of Hagia Sophia in Edessa and Constantinople with prayers,⁵¹ the author of the *kontakion* to Hagia Sophia in Constantinople who addresses it to God the Saviour, and the Syrian author of Edessa to the Holy Trinity. Moreover, in section 16 of the *kontakion*, the author – presumably a pupil of Romanos the Melode – develops the theme of spiritual sacrifice. One must bring sacrifice 'in spirit and truth, not in reeking smoke and streams of blood', but 'the tears of prayers...and the melodies of psalms'.⁵²

The mystic features of the poem could be related to contemporary attitude towards spiritual worship illustrated by Hypatius, the archbishop of Ephesus. In the letter addressed by Hypatius to Julian bishop of Atramytiun, the bishop allocates an important place in spiritual worship to prayer and the use of abundant light in the church, because holy souls are temples of God. Men should bring prayer in every place by lifting their hands to heaven: 'I want the men in every place to offer prayer lifting to heaven hands that are holy'.⁵³ The adornment of the church, particularly with gold and silver and the abundant light can guide the soul to the divine: 'we permit each order of the faithful to be guided and led up to the divine being in a manner appropriate to it because we think that some people are guided even by these (i. e. gold, silver, etc.) towards the intelligible beauty and from the abundant light in the sanctuaries to the intelligible and immaterial light'.⁵⁴ The abundant light in the church is for Hypatius a channel of communication with the Divine

⁵¹ Andrew Palmer, Lyn Rodley, 'The inaugural anthem of Hagia Sophia in Edessa: a new edition and translation with historical and architectural notes and a comparison with a contemporary Constantinopolitan *kontakion*', *BMGS* 12 (1988), 133, 144.

⁵² Andrew Palmer, 143.

⁵³ Paul J. Alexander, 'Hypatius of Ephesus A Note on Image Worship in the Sixth Century', *Harvard Theological Review*, Volume XLV Number 3, July 1952, 180.

⁵⁴ Idem.

Light. Like the lifting hands in prayer, light is a path to God. The abundant light in Paul's description, as well as the presence of the prayer belong to this theological context of 6th c. concerned with spiritual worship. Likewise, David's hymns in the poem may be connected with the liturgical shift that replaced in time the sacrifice instituted by Moses, and not necessarily to a specific moment of the liturgy. This idea is explicit in Hyppolitus,⁵⁵ as well as the Fathers of the Church. The presence of elements of 'sacrificial language'⁵⁶ in the poem gives the text a liturgical dimension. Paul's vision is liturgical by virtue of its utterance, yet it is a spiritual contemplation (*νοήσεισ*), a paradoxical vision (the vesperal dawn) for which words are insufficient. Indeed, as Makrides and Magdalino have noticed,⁵⁷ Paul applies to the word *νοήτιν* to invite his audience 'to see.'⁵⁸ Language is in stalemate; the eye must prepare for a wondrous vision: 'Thus is everything adorned with splendour (*ἀγλαΐη*). Thus may you see (*νοήσεισ*) all that fills the eyes with wonder (*πάντα νοήσεις ὁμμασι θάμβος ἄγοντα*). But to sing with clear voice this vesperal dawn no words are sufficient' (806-8). Paul's *ekphrasis* is not objectively detailed but liturgically implicated – hence, read aloud at the consecration.⁵⁹ A 'timeless' dimension could be also perceived in Dionysius' text. As Gregory Shaw notes, 'Dionysius relates liturgical actions to timeless and intelligible realities', specific to the Neoplatonists like Iamblichus, rather than correlating the actions of the liturgy to events in Jesus's life and death, which was standard patristic practice.⁶⁰ Paul belongs to this spiritual context. An additional liturgical connotation of the poem

⁵⁵ PG 10. 712B.

⁵⁶ Everett Ferguson, 'Spiritual Sacrifice', *PRINCIPAT Dreiund-zwanzigster Band, Religion*, Herausgeben von Wolfgang Haase (Walter de Gruyter Berlin New York, 1980), p. 1189.

⁵⁷ Macrides and Magdalino, 60.

⁵⁸ In French translation 'tout, vous les verrez, offer merveille aux yeux'.

⁵⁹ I owe this comment to Prof. Charles Lock.

⁶⁰ Gregory Shaw, 'Neoplatonic Theurgy and Dionysius the Areopagite', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 7.4 (1999), 582.

could be derived, in my view, from the spectacular bronze twisted chains (σειρά) hanging from everywhere in the Great Church. This most intriguing image in the poem, the source of the circling choir of bright lights (Εὐσελάων δέ κύκλιος ἐκ φαέων χορὸς ἵσταται), belongs to the same spiritual context that will be further examined.

In classical literature, the golden chain is a *topos*, which goes back to Homer⁶¹ and can be summed up thus: if a golden chain were let down from heaven, and the gods pulled at one end, they would not be able to pull it down, whereas he could lift with ease all the deities and created things besides with his single might. The paradigm of the golden chain is present in Plato,⁶² and developed by Proclus in his concept of series or order of things as unity (διὸ καὶ μία σειρά καὶ μία τάξις).⁶³ The image of the golden chain hanging down from heaven is to be found also in Pseudo-Dionysius' *The Mystical Theology*, where a whole chapter is devoted to the necessity of prayer in *The Divine Names* (DN 3, 1 680A-D). He says that we must stretch ourselves prayerfully upward to God, but we must let ourselves being lifted upward to the dazzling light, rather than pulling down the shining chain: 'So let us stretch ourselves prayerfully upward to the more lofty elevation of the kindly Rays of God. Imagine a great shining chain hanging downward from the heights of heaven to the world below. We grab hold of it with one hand and then another, and we seem to be pulling it down toward us. Actually it is already there on the heights and down below and instead of pulling it to us we are being lifted upward to that brilliance above, to the dazzling light of those beams' (PD, DN 680C, p. 68). The prayer, says Dionysius, makes us present to God preparing us for union with Him and cleansing.⁶⁴ Dionysius applies to the example of the chain hanging down from heaven to speak about the experience

⁶¹ Hom. *Il.* 8, 19.

⁶² *Theaetetus* 153e-d

⁶³ T. Taylor, *The Commentaries of Plato on the Timaeus of Plato*, Kessinger Publishing, Kila, Montana, Book III, p. 406.

⁶⁴ DN 3.1 680 B.

of prayer as a mode of change.⁶⁵ The golden chain is present in the Christian doctrine of Saint Paul, Saint John Chrysostom (347-407 CE) and Gregory of Nyssa (c.335-395). Christian theologians, like pagan philosophers, perceived the golden chain as a sort of bond by which creatures are linked to God. The emphasis is on the relation between Christians and Christ, as in the explanation of the name of the Christian in Gregory of Nyssa.⁶⁶

Paul describes light with a remarkable abundance of terms and rich vocabulary. Often, the poet uses a fiery idiom,⁶⁷ where the fire is at the centre of light imagery. For example, in the image of the tree-like candelabrum that stood above the iconostasis: 'there within these circles (i.e. diminishing upwards like a fir-tree) grown a flower whose seed is fire' (ἐν δὲ νυ κείνοις ἄνθος ἀνεβλάστησε πυρισπόρον) (871-879). Among countless lights illuminating the space of the church, some of them 'shed their bright flame (πυρὸς φλόγα) at the summit' (887-88). The simile of the flower, tree and fire originates from Jewish symbolism illustrated by the *menorah*, the candlestick.⁶⁸ *Menorah* was believed to be the tree of life and the bearer of lights, combining thus the symbol of both light and tree (with capital and flowers from the description of the candlestick in Exodus 25, 33). At the same time, *menorah* has been also a symbol of fire.⁶⁹ The seed of the flower as fire originates in

⁶⁵ About mystical experience in Pseudo-Dionysius, see Chad Richardson, "Mystical Experience: The Possibility of Theology in Pseudo-Dionysius," *The Graduate Journal of Interdisciplinary Research Villanova University*, Spring 1999.

⁶⁶ Gregory of Nyssa uses the metaphor of the 'chain' to describe the union, which binds together the Christians by Christ's name (*About the Meaning of the Name 'Christian'*).

⁶⁷ Like in the line 831, or in the symbolism of bronze, which could be read according to Pseudo-Dionysius as fire and gold (CH Ch. XV 336C)

⁶⁸ J. Massingberg Ford, "The Ray, the Root and the River A Note on the Jewish Origin of Trinitarian Images", *Studia Patristica* XI (1972), 158-165.

⁶⁹ E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, vol.4 (New York, 1954), p. 81.

the burning bush, the symbol of God 'who dwelt in the bush'.⁷⁰ A tree-like candelabrum and fair flowers stood around the ambo (124-5). The function of Paul's circling lights and fire carried by *longue* bronze chains becomes clearer with the help of Pseudo-Dionysius. According to him, abundance of terms in describing light brings the divine closer and makes it more present to the faithful. It is why the Word of God seems to honor above all depictions of fire.⁷¹ The fire is a mode of being uplifted to God because 'the power of fire causes a lifting up to the godlike'.⁷² It is my assumption that Paul's imagery hints to such spiritual uplifting of those souls worthy to become 'temples of God' by the power of fire and spiritual worship.

Vision of such abundant light affects the viewer's perception: it 'strikes'⁷³ (*ἐπεσκίρτησε*)⁷⁴ the eye', says Paul. As a result, vision becomes a watery sight. The liquid stream of gold strikes the countenance of the beholder: 'The vaulting is compacted of gilded tesserae from which a glittering stream of gold rays pours abundantly and strikes men's eyes with irresistible force (so that they can scarcely bear to look)' (668-671). The image of the golden 'stream' is not just a poetical figure of speech, but also an important *topos* in Late Antiquity literature concerning vision. Theories of vision like those formulated by Theophrastus, Empedocles and Timaeus, refer to the fluid element ('water') in connection with the watering of the eyes before a dazzling light or when the 'fire' of the eye 'shines back', i.e. meets the shining of the fire coming from the object seen, which results in a visual stream. However, the eye injury eventually caused by bright light contradicts extramission theory according to which a visual fire emanates from the eye itself. Rather, the passage

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 73.

⁷¹ CH 15 328C to 329C 38....

⁷² PD, CH 305A. See also CH7 205BC; CH 15 328C to 329C 38.

⁷³ I follow Mango's translation, but it can be also translated as 'jumps', 'leaps upon' or even 'rejoices', like in the hymnography of the Annunciation or Luke 1: 39-49.

⁷⁴ Cf. Nonnus Epicus, *Dionysiaca* 2. 29, ed. A. Ludwich (Leipzig, 1969).

may be related to intramission theory advocated by theorists interested in physical or physiological aspects of vision (like Democritus and Aristotle), or it could be perceived as a new shaping vision, specific Byzantine (R. Nelson). It must be noticed that such kind of vision blurs the distinction between subject and object, it unifies seen and seer, which is the condition of mystic union: the identification between parts. A similar vision can be encountered in the 12th c. description, which describes in dramatic terms the collision between the moist eyes and the refulgence of gold. The effect is that the moisture of the eye appears in the gold that seems to 'drip down' (κατασπάζειν), flowing in a molten stream.⁷⁵ The presence of water symbolism in Paul's poem is a complex matter; it cannot be solely and entirely explained liturgically,⁷⁶ or viewed as an impact of some antique theories of vision evoked above. Mystical elements derived from contemporary worship and spiritual sacrifice evoked, for example, in 'the tears of prayers' (Andrew Palmer, 143), could have perhaps informed and reshaped those old theories of vision. It is only my contention that in this new shaped Byzantine vision, the presence of χορός, with its whirling effect on perception, was an efficient means that helped express the mystic union between the divine and the faithful. Other aspects of water symbolism, perhaps eschatological in their meaning, could be identified in the poem, such as the image of the silver ships bearing a luminous

⁷⁵ Cyril Mango and John Parker, 'A Twelfth-Century Description of St. Sophia', *DOP* 14 (1960), 237. 'How its countenance flashes forth like liquid (ὡς υγρότης) through the gold which is everywhere! (διὰ τὸν παντὶ χρυσόν)'.

⁷⁶ Macrides and Magdalino, 65.

freight sailing in the liquid air, where the ship⁷⁷ is a metaphor of the soul.⁷⁸

A different interpretation of vision of the bronze chains can be extracted from The Oration in Praise of the Emperor Constantine pronounced on the Thirtieth Anniversary of His reign by Eusebius.⁷⁹ The golden chain is mentioned in relation with "the fair trappings" bestowed by the Sovereign. These are 'the reins of ineffable wisdom', by which the emperor wisely controls the empire, not binding it like the golden chain imagined by the poet in Eusebius' text.⁸⁰ The reins of the ineffable wisdom of the emperor substitute the ancient glory of the golden chain. This imperial interpretation of the old paradigm could have been a model for Justinian. Paul makes a clear point in the poem about the relation between the imperial wisdom and the brazen chains. Moreover, the wisdom is attributed to 'our Emperors', a plural that makes one think of a tradition behind, which may derive from Constantine: 'For the deep wisdom of our Emperors has stretched from the projecting stone cornice...long

⁷⁷ The ship itself could be also read as the chain if we follow Pseudo-Dionysius' alternative picture of hawsers joining to a rock: 'We take hold of them and pull on them, and it is as if we were dragging the rock to us when in fact we are hauling ourselves and our boat toward that rock' (DN 3.1 680D).

⁷⁸ In Problems of the Soul (IV. 3. 17), Plotinus draws a parallel between the souls and the ships. Some souls remain above, some that are drawn further downward, attracted by the splendor of the object they illuminate. These last find that their charges need more and more care: 'the steersman of the storm-tossed ship is so intent on saving it that he forgets his own interest and never thinks that he is recurrently in peril of being dragged down with the vessel; similarly the souls are intent upon contriving for their charges and finally come to be pulled down by them; they are fettered in bonds of sorcery, gripped and held by their concern for the realm of Nature'.

⁷⁹ 'The Oration of Eusebius Pamphilus in praise of the Emperor Constantine. Pronounced on the Thirtieth Anniversary of His Reign', *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of The Christian Church*, vol. I, T&T Clark Edinburgh, Grand Rapids (Michigan, 1991), pp. 581-610.

⁸⁰ 'The Oration of Eusebius', p. 587.

twisted chains of beaten brass' (810-12). A glimpse of what may have been once this spectacular sight of twisted chains of Hagia Sophia can be contemplated even today. Yet, this interesting aspect of the iconography of the sacred space of Hagia Sophia has never held the attention of Byzantine scholars. It is my assumption that this powerful image may have stood at the very core of the conception of space of the imperial church. We will however never know whether this Constantinian interpretation of the golden chain from Eusebius' text has been in the minds of the Byzantine architects and of the wise emperor when the Great Church was rebuilt. But we have reasons to believe that the glorious time of Constantine, the enlightened-wise emperor,⁸¹ has certainly been a point of aspiration in Justinian's imperial politics. This offered the poet the noble opportunity to create most dramatic scenery, which exalted both the citizen bond, as well as the mystic bond with the divine. The brazen chains, a metaphor of mystic union, focused the whole density of light symbolism and prayer – a deep concern of contemporary mysticism. It visualized in a powerful way Pseudo-Dionysius' view that one must stretch oneself prayfully upward from this chain, and let oneself be uplifted to the dazzling divine light.

CONCLUSION

In this paper I have tried to read Paul's description of lighting of Hagia Sophia as a vision, at once poetical, mystical and philosophical. Paul's poem was, among *ekphraseis* of the Great Church, an imperial oration, a living utterance, transcribing the effect worked upon the viewer by the perception of sacred things, the vision of the divine in 6th c. Byzantium. In describing his vision, a special attention was given by the poet to the vision of light, at a time when light was celebrated throughout the whole empire.⁸² It is not clear

⁸¹ 'The Oration of Eusebius', p. 583.

⁸² See Jaś Elsner, 'Viewing and the Sacred: Pagan, Christian and The Vision of God', *Art and the Roman Viewer. The Transformation of Art from the Pagan World to Christianity* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 88-124 and

from the poem which liturgical moment is enacted at the lighting of lamps, but lighting in the Byzantine church could only have a liturgical function. Yet the poet makes no reference to a specific liturgical moment. Vision of lighting in the Great Church is indescribable; the discourse of the poet is in stalemate. The language of the mystics inspires his idiom. The encounter between classical tradition and mystical theology makes his poetry become the ground of a mystical vision. Throughout the entire poem, time has a paradoxical course stressed by such oxymoronic imagery like 'the dawn of evening' or the 'nocturnal sun'. For Macrides and Magdalino the temporal dimension of the poem remains timeless, which is a function of its topicality.⁸³ In my view, the poem's timelessness relates also to mystic experience, which becomes clearer in the description of light. Paul's poetical vision of light reflects in a special way this characteristic. In the manner of the mystics, his vision is presented in terms of personal experience similar to the discourse of such mystics like Plotinus and Pseudo-Dionysius. The description of their mystic experience is similar at least in three points: first, a sense of timelessness of vision;⁸⁴ second, the experience involves union or closeness to God, which is metaphorically expressed in Paul's poem by the bonds of chains; third, vision of God fills one with indescribable love⁸⁵ and joy,⁸⁶ like in Plotinus 1.6.7 (12-18)⁸⁷; 6.9.4 (16-23); 6.7.34-5 'or the end of

Andrew Palmer, Lyn Rodley, "The inaugural anthem of Hagia Sophia in Edessa: a new edition and translation with historical and architectural notes and a comparison with a contemporary Constantinopolitan *kontakion*", *BMGS* 12 (1988), 117-167.

⁸³ Macrides and Magdalino, 82.

⁸⁴ *Idem*

⁸⁵ 158-59

⁸⁶ 159-60

⁸⁷ 'And one that shall know this vision – with what passion of love shall he not be seized, with what pang of desire, what longing to be molten into one with This, what wondering delight! If he that has never seen this being must hunger for It as for all his welfare, he that has known must love and

Paul's prayer with the sight of Hagia Sophia. Paul speaks about the joy at the look of Christ's image, which is the perception not of a pure innocent eye but the experience of a mystical vision, and this gives his poem a liturgical dimension. The abundant light in Paul's description of Hagia Sophia and the prayer that ends the poem belong to the theological context of 6th c. concerned with spiritual worship. Light is described as if the poet himself followed Hypathius' instructions. The metaphor of twisted bronze chains hanging in the sacred space of the imperial church emphasizes this perception. Paul's vision is liturgically implicated, at least for two reasons: the living utterance of the poem, read aloud at the consecration, and the personal character of mystical experience of vision. Paul's text departs from the pure technical description conveyed by the genre of *ekphrasis* practiced before by other authors.

The description of the illumination of the church was rendered in connection with the space itself, space and light being similarly perceived by the poet. Lighting was not understood as an additional element in the space but as an organic part of the architectural structure, necessarily partaking both of the same movement – the *χορός*.⁸⁸ *Χορός* is a Neoplatonic concept, adapted by Christianity

reverence It as the very Beauty; he will be flooded with awe and gladness, stricken by a salutary terror; he loves with a veritable love, with sharp desire; all other loves than this he must despise, and disdain all that once seemed fair'. 'Beholding this Being – the Chorus of all Existence, the Self-Intent that ever gives forth and never takes – resting, rapt, in the vision and possession of so lofty a loveliness, growing to Its likeness, what Beauty can the Soul yet lack? For This, the Beauty supreme, the absolute, and the primal, fashions Its lovers to Beauty and makes them also worthy of love'. (I. 6. 7)

⁸⁸ In *The Enneads* II. 2. 1, Plotinus explains why the Heavenly circuit must take a circular course: 'it must take the circuit course by its indwelling nature; for it seeks the straight line onwards but finds no further space and is driven back so that it recoils on the only course left to it: there is nothing beyond'. 'If it did not take the curve, its straight line would finally fling it outside the universe: the circular course, then, is imperative'.

that Paul could have borrowed from the philosophy of Proclus and Plotinus or from the mystics of Pseudo-Dionysius. The image Paul transcribes is that of a building construed after the principle of revolving into oneself, that is, as Divine Sophia. This can be discerned in his description of the architectural space and lighting. The progression of the recitation of the poem indicates such movement. The Divine Sophia, like Sophia Salomonis (VII. 27) and the Divine Wisdom of Pseudo-Dionysius, knows things by only knowing itself, not spreading itself outwardly but looking inwards for a gathering in itself. Likewise, Paul's vision of Hagia Sophia is a self-reflecting continual space. The innumerable lights, hanging on twisted chains give the space of Hagia Sophia an 'ever-changing aspect contained within itself'.

Hagia Sophia was perceived throughout time as the embodiment of a true miracle. It was viewed as the expression of power and wisdom of the emperor, who was divinely inspired in the conception of the building; it was a mark of perfection and harmony of architectural forms. But harmony and perfection of forms may be too vague aesthetic terms to explain a complex theological concept like the Divine Sophia. I believe that by applying to the concept of *χορός* and the Neo-Platonic terms 'procession and return' the contemporary reader could advance in the understanding of the specific harmony of the 'sophianic' work. The lighting of Hagia Sophia, as presented by Paul, is an integral part of a vast theological model of the world, embodied by the imperial church, a synthesis of philosophical thinking encapsulated in new Christian concepts. In this respect, Paul's poem brought its contribution to the process of shaping of the literary genre of Byzantine *ekphrasis* of sacred space. His work was an imperial duty by which the poet served his emperor, and the need

to build up the image of the imperial church, of the wise emperor, and to exalt the power of faith by means of image and text. A key component of this model was the illumination of the church with the brazen chains holding the choirs of lights. In the space of the Great Church, this image was a powerful metaphor and a paradigm to express the reins of 'ineffable wisdom' and light, by which the emperor wisely controls the empire just like his noble descendant, Constantine, reinforcing thus the past glory and the power of the empire. Meanwhile, the illumination of the church with its spectacular chains of light seems to reflect also a deep theological concern of contemporary mysticism.

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BYZANTINE STUDIES PRESENT AND FUTURE

These are some broad comments on the present state of and trends in Byzantine studies in North America, with special emphasis on historical studies.¹ It is an overview, with all of the deficiencies inherent in such a format. It is both retrospective and an effort to peer into the future.

I. Restrospective. Here I turn to make some very subjective comments about contemporary trends and conditions. The field of Byzantine studies is radically better and broader and healthier than it was when I was an undergraduate in the 1950s. A lot has changed. When I decided as a high school senior in the mid 1950s to concentrate in the seventh through eighth century after reading Gibbon and Toynbee's *Study of History*, there were few east-coast specialists on what was then called the Later Roman Empire or Byzantine Empire and the situation was worse elsewhere. In college I could meet and consult only with Glanville Downey and Andreas Alföldi, both of whom were located at research institutes, not teaching institutions (Harvard's Center for Byzantine Studies at Dumbarton Oaks and The Institute for Advanced Study respectively). Peter Charanis was teaching at Rutgers, Wolff at Harvard, Ševčenko at Columbia. Things have changed a lot.

In complex ways U.S. Byzantine studies temporarily received some modest tertiary but also sometimes distorting interest and stimulus

¹ This is a revised version of "The Present and Future of Byzantine Studies," which I delivered to the Hellenic Students Organization, Humanities Institute, University of Illinois at Chicago, on 27 March 2002. I am grateful for comments from the audience and separate ones from David Olster, Nikos Kalogeras, Leonidas Pittos, Christian Raffensberger, and Ruma Niyogi.



THE EMPEROR, THE EMBASSY, THE LETTER AND THE RECIPIENT: THE BYZANTINE LETTER OF 615 TO KHUSRAU II AND ITS HISTORY

In 615,¹ the government of the Emperor Herakleios sent three envoys to the Persian King Khusrau II (590-628) in order to deliver a letter in which the newly proclaimed Byzantine emperor was urging Khusrau to consider a reconciliation between Byzantium and Persia. The letter was sent in the middle of a devastating war, with the flames still burning the Byzantine territories in order to defuse the crisis between Byzantium and Persia. The contemporary to the events *Chronicon Paschale* (henceforth *CP*), written by an anonymous author, is the only source that preserves the whole text of the letter.² Several later

* I wish to thank Prof. John Haldon and Dr. Mary Whitby, who have read a previous version of this paper and have made valuable suggestions.

¹ *Chronicon Paschale*, ed. L. Dindorf (CSHB, Bonn 1832) 705, dates the letter in 615: Ἡρακλείου Αυγούστου τὸ ε'. Theophanes is confused about the chronology of the embassy. 615 must be the most accurate date because the *CP* is contemporary to the events and its author provides detailed chronological evidence, since he refers to the reign of Ἡράκλειος νέος Κωνσταντῖνος. A. Stratos discusses the problem of chronology in *Τὸ Βυζάντιον στὸν Ζ' αἰῶνα* (5 vols) vol. I (602-626) (Athens 1965) 249-251 and 289-293. Also, K. Ericsson, "Revising a Date in the *Chronicon Paschale*" *JÖB* 17 (1968) 17-28, esp. 25 dated the text of the letter to the year 617-618. The letter is now safely dated to 615 by W. Kaegi, "Two Notes on Herakleios," *REB* 37 (1979) 221-227, esp. 221-224, where he provides strong arguments for the acceptance of 615 or at the latest 616 as the year of the embassy.

² According to the *CP*, 708.11-13, this was the first embassy dispatched from Herakleios to the Persians. Michael and Mary Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale 284-628 AD, Translated Texts for Historians* 7 (Liverpool 1989) 162, n. 444 believe that the author of the *CP* seems to have had access to an accurate copy of this letter.

Byzantine sources record the episode, though only in a summary form. It is interesting to note that the description of the incident has come down to the present with several variations, one of which pays debt to the *CP*; it is not certain, however, on which source (s) - written or oral - the other variations are based or to what degree these narratives were dulled by time.

The author of the *CP*, delivers the text of the letter after the presentation of a number of defeats that the Byzantines had suffered by the Persians, most important of which were the conquests of Damascus (613) and Jerusalem (614).³ According to the *CP*, the Persian general Sahin, who had managed to march as close to the Byzantine capital as Chalcedon in 615, promised Herakleios that if he sent an embassy to Khusrau II, the latter would accept his plea for peace.⁴

Although modern scholarship attributes the letter under examination to the Byzantine Senate, the *CP*, the only (and most reliable) source that preserves the whole text of the letter, credits the initiative of this embassy to three high officials without mentioning the word Senate (σύγκλητος). The three envoys in question were Olympios,⁵ the praetorian prefect, Leontios,⁶ the

³ For a geography of the Persian campaigns against Byzantium, see Cl. Foss, "The Persians in Asia Minor and the end of Antiquity", *EHR* 90 (1975) 721-747, esp. 721-728, repr. in his *History and Archaeology of Byzantine Asia Minor* I (London: Variorum, 1990); On Heraclius' Persian campaigns, see also J. Howard-Johnston, "Heraclius' Persian campaigns and the revival of the East Roman Empire 622-630", *War in History* 6/1 (1999) 1-44.

⁴ *CP*, 706. Also, *Vita Anastasii Persae*, ed. B. Flusin in *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'histoire de la Palestine au début du VII^e siècle*, 2 vols (Paris 1992), vol. I, ch. 8 and vol. II, 67-97.

⁵ Olympios was a honorary consul, patricius and the *Praefectus Praetorio per Orientem*. See J. Martindale, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire: A.D. 527-641*, (hence *PLRE*) vol. IIIB (Cambridge 1992) 6, s.v. OLYMPIOS. Also, R. Guillard, "Les Patrices byzantins de la première moitié du VII^e siècle:

prefect of the city of Constantinople, and Anastasios,⁷ *oikonomos*, presbyter and *synkellos* of the Church of Saint Sophia⁸ and as the wording of the letter betrays the three

du règne de Phokas (602-610) au règne de Constant II (641-668)" in *Τόμος εἰς μνήμην Κ.Ι. Ἀμάντου* (Athens 1960) 11-24, esp. 165 repr. in Guillard, *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines*, 162-9. According to the *Notitia Dignitatum*, the *Praefectus Praetorio per Orientem* is mentioned as the second highest civil office in the early Byzantine period, ranked immediately below the emperor. Number three and four in the state hierarchy are, according to the same text the *Praefectus Praetorio per Illyricum* and the *Praefectus Urbi Constantinopolitanae*. See *Notitia Dignitatum Utriusque Imperii*, ed. O. Seeck (Leipzig 1876) 1. On the important role of the praetorian prefect in the early Byzantine period, see I. Lydos, *Ioannis Lydi De Magistratibus Populi Romani Libri Tres*, ed. R. Wünsch (Leipzig 1903) esp. books 2 and 3. Also, C.N. Tsirpanlis, "Mémoires et documents: John Lydos on the Imperial Administration" *Byzantion* 44 (1974) 479-501, esp. 489-494.

⁶ Leontios was a honorary consul, patricius and *Praefectus Urbi Constantinopolitanae*. *PLRE* IIIB, 31, s.v. LEONTIOS.

⁷ *PLRE* IIIA, 36, s.v. ANASTASIOS. On the function of the *oikonomos* in the early and middle Byzantine periods (5th-10th c.), see Darrouzès, *ΟΦΦΙΚΙΑ*, 16-19; Leontaritou, *Εκκλησιαστικά αξιώματα και υπηρεσίες στην πρώιμη και μέση Βυζαντινή περίοδο*, *Forschungen zur byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte, Athener Reihe* 8 (Athens-Komotêñe 1996) 352-418; I. Pelilis, *Τίτλοι, Όφφικία και αξιώματα ἐν τῇ Βυζαντινῇ αὐτοκρατορίᾳ καὶ τῇ χριστιανικῇ ὁροδόξῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ* (Athens 1985) 53-58.

⁸ *CP*, 706.17-20: καὶ ἐπέμφθησαν ἐξ ἡμῶν πρεσβευταὶ τρεῖς, τουτέστιν Ὀλύμπιος ἑπαρχὸς πραιτωρίων καὶ Λεόντιος ἑπαρχὸς πόλεως καὶ Ἀναστάσιος πρεσβύτερος τῆς κατὰ Κωνσταντινουπόλιν ἀγιωτάτης μεγάλης ἐκκλησίας... and towards the end of the letter, *ibid.*, 709.6-11: τοὺς δούλους ὑμῶν <of Khusrāu II> ἀπελύσαμεν Ὀλύμπιον τὸν ἐνδοξότατον ἀπὸ ὑπάτων, πατρικίων καὶ ἑπαρχῶν τῶν πραιτωρίων, καὶ Λεόντιον τὸν ἐνδοξότατον ἀπὸ ὑπάτων, πατρικίων καὶ ἑπαρχῶν πόλεως καὶ Ἀναστάσιον τὸν θεοφιλέστατον πρεσβύτερον καὶ σύγκελλον. According to M. and M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, *op.cit.*, 160 and n. 443, "the inclusion on the embassy of a high-ranking ecclesiastic reflects the importance of the church in secular affairs." The *Short History* of Patriarch Nikephoros, records the same names in the

ambassadors represented the Senate.⁹ It goes without saying, of course, that although the letter was penned by and read to Khusrau II by these three first-class officials, it was Emperor Herakleios who conceptualized it. Taking the embassy of 615 as a starting point, this paper tries to demonstrate the wide number of issues that are involved in this single act of foreign policy, such as the role of the senate and the emperor in the state affairs, the real and the virtual power of the Byzantine empire in the Mediterranean world of Late Antiquity as well as the ideology of Byzantine historiography and its purposes.

The History

Roman senators seem to have served individually as delegates in embassies to foreign nations as early as the Republic. The deterioration of the political role of the Roman Senate began as early as the period of the Principate, though with some lucid intervals such as the reign of Tiberius (14-37).¹⁰ The rise of

same order for the three ambassadors (διαπρεσβευσόμενοι). See Nikephoros, *Ἱστορία Σύντομος* (hence *Historia*), ed. and trans. C. Mango, *Nikephoros Patriarch of Constantinople Short History* (Washington, D.C. 1990) ch. 7.6-9. Also, Nikephoros, *Χρονογραφικόν*, *ibid.*, ch. 7.2-5: καὶ ἤδη ἐξελέγοντο Ὀλύμπιος ἑπαρχος τῶν πραιτωρίων, Ἀναστάσιος τε ὁ τῶν πραγμάτων τῆς μεγίστης ἐκκλησίας οἰκονόμος, Λεόντιος ὁ τῆς πόλεως ἑπαρχος. As in *CP*, Olympios is styled as praetorian prefect (ὑπαρχος τῶν πραιτωρίων), Leontios as prefect of the city (τῆς πόλεως ὑπαρχος) though Anastasios is described only as financial administrator (ὁ τὴν οἰκονομίαν τοῦ μεγίστου λεγοῦ) of the Church of Hagia Sophia. The names of these three envoys do not appear in literary sources other than the above mentioned.

⁹ This becomes obvious from a reference to the invitation of the Senate sent to Herakleios the elder in order to request his help against Phokas.

¹⁰ On the role of the Roman Senate in diplomacy in the period of *Principatus*, see R. Talbert, "Diplomacy, the Army and Foreign Affairs" in *The Senate of Imperial Rome* (Princeton 1984) 408-430. Referring to the role of the Senate in Imperial Rome, F. Millar, *The Roman Empire and Its Neighbours*, 2nd English edition (London 1967) 21, observes that "if the Senate had not existed it would

imperial despotism under Augustus significantly diminished the role of the Senate. Never again did the Senate resume the significant role that it had played in Republican Rome, especially after the death of Marcus Aurelius in 180. The distribution of honorary titles by Roman emperors for the sake of popularity increased the number of senators and the ease of admission to the senatorial order in the fourth and especially in the fifth century adversely affected the importance and significance of the senatorial elite.

By the mid-fifth century the senatorial order became so enlarged that the status and the privileges of the highest grade, the *illustres*, expanded at the expense of the lower *spectabiles* and *clarissimi*.¹¹ During the Justinianic reign only the *illustres* had the right to gain senatorial titles, to vote for civil cases and express their opinion about the internal and external policy of the State.¹² Granting the real power to *illustres*, Justinian wished to maintain the prestige of the Senate and prevent it from possible

not have had to be invented." Also A. Chastagnol, *Le Sénat romain à l'époque impériale* (Paris 1992); also, idem, "La fin du Sénat de Rome," in *La fin de la cité antique et le début de la cité médiévale*, ed. C. Lepelley (Bari 1996) and M.T.W. Arnhem, *The Senatorial Aristocracy in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford 1972).

¹¹ J. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century: The Transformation of a Culture* (Cambridge 1990) 162. Also G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une Capitale: Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (Paris 1974) 164-165. Cf. R. Guiland, "La noblesse Byzantine remarques", *REB* 24 (1966) 40-57, esp. 45-47. On the identification of the Byzantine Senate, see A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire (284-602)* vol. I (Baltimore, Maryland 1964) 523-562; also, J.B. Bury, *The Constitution of the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge 1910), esp. 7-10. Also, D. Olster, *The Politics of Usurpation in the Seventh Century: Rhetoric and Revolution in Byzantium* (Amsterdam 1993) 23-32.

¹² Justinian, *Novellae*, eds. R. Schöll and W. Kroll (Berlin 1892-5; repr. Berlin 1945-63) 62.2.

degeneration. Therefore, the Senate became a relatively small body.¹³

During the early Byzantine period the Senate of Constantinople often participated in foreign policy and its role and power depended much on individual emperors and on the fluctuation of their power.¹⁴ In 576/7 delegates of the Senate were sent to the Persian King Khusrau I in order to confirm a peace treaty between the Persians and the Byzantines.¹⁵ Likewise,

¹³ Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, 162: "By the time of Justinian, only *illustres* could belong to the senate proper and bear the title senator." See *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World*, eds. G.W. Bowersock, P. Brown, O. Grabar (Cambridge, Mass. 1999) s.v. SENATE, 689-690: "As a result, the *clarissimi* and *spectabiles* were officially cut off from membership in the Senate and retained only the right to pay senatorial taxes. Thereafter only *illustres* could be true senators, the size of the Senate would have plunged to not much more than a hundred, if even that."

¹⁴ The most complete monograph on the Byzantine Senate still remains that of Aik. Christophilopoulou, *Ἡ Σύγκλητος εἰς τὸ Βυζαντινὸν Κράτος* in *Ἐπετηρὶς τοῦ Ἀρχείου τῆς Ἱστορίας τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Δικαίου* 2 (Athens 1949). Also Ch. Diehl, "Le Sénat et le Peuple byzantin aux VII^e et VIII^e siècles", *Byzantion* 1 (1946) 119-133, where he examines the function of the Senate and H.G. Beck, "Senat und Volk von Konstantinopel: Probleme der byzantinischen Verfassungsgeschichte", *Sitzungsberichte der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Kl.* 1966, Heft 6, 1-75, repr. in idem, *Ideen und Realitäten in Byzanz* XII (London 1972), where he courses the Byzantine period. On early Byzantine diplomacy, see E. Chrysos, "Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 300-800: Means and Ends" in *Byzantine Diplomacy (Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990)* ed. J. Shepard and S. Franklin (London 1992) 25-39.

¹⁵ Theophylact Simocatta, *Historia*, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig 1887) ed. and corr. P. Wirth (Stuttgart 1972) III.15.6: "ὁ δὲ Καῖσαρ ταῦτα πυθόμενος ἐς διαλλαγὰς ποιέειν διέγνω. ἐκπέμπει γοῦν τοὺς περὶ συμβάσεως λόγους δυνατοὺς καθιδρῦσασθαι κεχειροτονηκῶς πρεσβευτὰς Ἰωάννην καὶ Πέτρον, ἐν τῇ κορυφαίᾳ τῆς συγκλήτου βουλῆς τελοῦντας ἀξία (πατέριοι δ' ἄρα ὄντες ἐτύγχανον), Θεόδωρόν τε τῇ μαγιστερίᾳ ἀρχῇ παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις τιμώμενόν τε καὶ γεραίρομενον. Cf. Konstantinos Porphyrogennitos, *Excerpta*

during the siege of Singidunum a representative of the Senate was sent to the Khan of the Avars in order to ask him to put an end to the war.¹⁶ When the Persian King Khusrau II requested military assistance from Emperor Maurikios against the usurper Bahram in 590, the Senate advised the emperor to disregard Khusrau's appeal. On the other hand, Domitian,¹⁷ who was a relative of the emperor, favored Khusrau's petition and Maurikios ultimately fell in with Domitian's views.¹⁸ In 591, after the accession of

de Legationibus, ed. C. de Boor, Pars II, *Excerpta de Legationibus gentium ad Romanos* (Berlin 1903) 480.28-33. See also, M. and M. Whitby, *The History of Theophylact Simocatta* (Oxford 1986) 96 and note 7. On the diplomacy between Byzantium and Persia in the sixth century, see M. Whitby, *The Emperor Maurikios and his Historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Persian and Balkan Warfare* (Oxford 1988) 215-218.

¹⁶ Theoph. Simocatta, *Historia*, I.4.6: πρεσβεύονται Ῥωμαῖοι πρὸς Χαγάνον καὶ τὸν πόλεμον ἀπεκηρυκέυσαντο, Ἐλπίδιον ἐκπέμψαντες, ἄνδρα ἐς συγκλήτου βουλὴν ἀναγόμενον. On Elpidius' post, see M. and M. Whitby, *Theophylact Simocatta*, *op.cit.*, 25 and note 26. Cf. Konstantinos Porphyrogennitos, *Excerpta de Legationibus*, ed. C. de Boor, Pars I, *Excerpta de Legationibus Romanorum ad Gentes* (Berlin 1903) 221.14-16.

¹⁷ Domitian was advisor to the emperor Maurikios, a diplomat and bishop of Melitene (c. 580-602/603). See *PLRE* IIIA, 411. It is not clearly defined how Domitian was related to Maurikios. A group of sources present Domitian as Maurikios' s nephew while another group present him as his cousin. On this, see A. Kolias-Dermizaki, Ὁ βυζαντινὸς ἱερεὺς πόλεμος: Ἡ ἔννοια καὶ ἡ προβολὴ τοῦ θρησκευτικοῦ πολέμου στὸ Βυζάντιο (Athens 1991) 159, n. 39.

¹⁸ On this incident see Theoph. Simocatta, *Historia*, IV.14.1: ὑπὸ τε τῆς βουλῆς καὶ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος δογματίζεται ἐπικουρῆσαι τῷ Χοσρόῳ; cf. *The Armenian History attributed to Sebeos*, trans., with notes, by R.W. Thomson; historical commentary by James Howard-Johnston; assistance from Tim Greenwood, 2 vols (Liverpool 1999) in *Translated Texts for Historians* 31, vol. II, ch. 11, 18-19. Cf. *The Chronicle of John (c. 690 A. D.) Coptic Bishop of Nikiu*, trans. by R.H. Charles from H. Zotenberg's edition of the Ethiopic text (London 1916) ch. 96.9-13. Olster, *Politics of Usurpation*, *op.cit.*, 32, observes

Khusrau II to the Persian throne and due to the ensuing peace, Maurikios decided to lead his army against the Avars. The Senate advised him against this decision but the emperor again ignored its advice.¹⁹

The continuous acceptance of newcomers into the Senate reveals the emperors' attempt to secure their power over the powerful, wealthy senators. In the seventh century the senatorial body did not encompass a unified social elite. Senate ceased to constitute a class (as defined by Max Weber) since the finances of individual senators varied dramatically. The Constantinopolitan Senate became an order whose members shared several common characteristics notwithstanding their great differences. The role of the Senate depended much on the emperors' personality and on the consolidation of their power. In periods of crises or at the beginning of reigns, when newly crowned emperors had not yet established their power, the Senate assumed or was asked to assume an important role in public affairs. In the late sixth and especially in the seventh century, senators participated in public affairs more as individuals than as members of the Senate.²⁰ The

that in the reign of Maurikios, "the growing prominence of the imperial family pushed the Senate far into the background."

¹⁹ Theoph. Simocatta, *Historia*, V.16.2 and VI.3.1. Also Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor, 2 vols (Leipzig 1883-5) vol. I, 268.4-6, where he probably copies Theophylact.

²⁰ At the end of the sixth century higher titular offices such as *magnifici*, *gloriosi* and *gloriosissimi* made their appearance and increased the numbers of the Senate. See Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, 164. The identification and the composition of the Senate is outside the scope of this paper, however, it is useful to distinguish the council of the Senate from the senatorial order in general. See R. Guillard, "Études sur l'histoire administrative de Byzance", *Byzantina-Metabyzantina* 1 (1946) esp. 178-179: "Il s'agit probablement du sénat assemblé opposé à l'ordre sénatorial." According to Haldon, *ibid.*, 389, the members of the Senate "were still drawn from a wide variety of social backgrounds and attained senatorial rank by a

above mentioned individuals were the "governing senators" who had strong affiliations with the emperor and were represented in the term "ἡ τοῦ παλατίου σύγκλητος".²¹

Continuous crises and upheavals in seventh-century politics led to political instability in which the Byzantine Senate played a rather important role.²² However, this was not the only factor that saved the Senate from further decline at the moment. From the sixth century on emperors appointed to the Senate newcomers who met with their liking and derived from their milieu. The selection was made under the pretext of meritocracy or pseudo-meritocracy, an evaluation without much significance.²³ This

multiplicity of routes". For another opinion, see Av. Cameron, "Images of Authority: Elites and Icons in Late Sixth Century Byzantium," *PP* 84 (1979) 3-35 [repr. in eadem, *Continuity and Change in Sixth-Century Byzantium* (London, 1981) XVIII].

²¹ The term "ἡ τοῦ παλατίου σύγκλητος" appears in the *Life of Gregory of Akragas* (BHG 707), ed. A. Berger, *Leontios Presbyteros von Rom: Das Leben des heiligen Gregorios von Agrigent in Berliner Byzantinische Arbeiten* 60 (Berlin 1995) 35.12. Christophilopoulou, *Σύγκλητος*, 90-91 believes that the term indicates the meeting point of the Senate, the palace. I believe that the term in question retains rather an institutional character.

²² Among a number of events that reveal the important role of the Senate in the seventh century is the succession crisis of 641. On this, see D. Missiou, *Η διαθήκη του Ηρακλείου Α' και η κρίση του 641 (Συμβολή στο πρόβλημα της διαδοχής στο Βυζάντιο)* ΕΕΦΣΑΠΘ 59 (1984). Also Diehl, "Le Sénat", 119-133. I believe that Diehl's general statement about the important role of the Senate between the seventh and ninth centuries is too optimistic. For a more analytical framework of events that involve the Senate as well as individual senators in hagiographical literature, see E. Chrestou, "Σύγκλητος-Συγκλητικοί κατά τη μέση βυζαντινή περίοδο: Οι μαρτυρίες αγιολογικών κειμένων και σφραγίδων", *Βυζαντικά* 14 (1994) 181-216.

²³ On the zeal of the first Byzantine emperors (3rd-4th c.) to form the new Constantinopolitan senatorial elite, see P. Heather, "New Men for New Constantines? Creating an imperial elite in the Eastern Mediterranean" in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th*

senatorial elite comprised first-grade senators, the *illustres*, who were active members of the Senate and who took part in decision making.²⁴ The new composition that arose encompassed members whom the emperor could trust more than he trusted the old aristocracy, which derived from hereditary accession.²⁵

Centuries, ed. P. Magdalino (Aldershot 1994) 11-33. See also G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale: Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (Paris 1984) 119-190.

²⁴ *Spectabiles* and *clarissimi* became only honorary titles without any substance. This probably occurred not only because of the inflation of these two grades but primarily because especially the *clarissime* remained hereditary. For the admission to the Senate in late antiquity, see Jones, *LRE*, vol. I, 523-535. On the hereditary transmission of titles in Byzantium, see R. Guiland, *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines* (Amsterdam 1967) 65-72. Also, Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, 160-165, esp. 163-164, where he paints in a few lines the portrait of the ruling élite in the seventh century: "Senatorial aristocracy" is a term which, for the sixth and early seventh century at least, is perhaps better used of this group alone, since in relation to wealth, power, the patronage of the court and the administration of the government, both in the civil and the military spheres, they constituted the ruling elite – the governing elite within the ruling class – of the empire."

²⁵ J. Haldon, *Byzantium: A History* (Stroud 2000) 113-117. On hereditary transmission of offices in Byzantium, R. Guiland, "La transmission héréditaire des titres nobiliaires à Byzance" in *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines*, 2 vols. (Berlin and Amsterdam 1967) vol. I 65-72. On early Byzantine government, see S. Barnish, A.D. Lee and M. Whitby, "Government and Administration" in *Cambridge Ancient History* (henceforth *CAH*) 14: *Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors, A.D. 425-600*, eds Av. Cameron, B. Ward-Perkins and M. Whitby (Cambridge 2000) ch. 7, 164-206. Very important in the understanding of the formation of the new order of senators as well as on the relationship between the Senate and emperors is the essay by P. Heather, "Senators and Senates", in *CAH* 13: *The Late Empire, A.D. 337-425*, eds Av. Cameron and P. Garnsey (Cambridge 1998) ch. 6, 184-210. Very important for the analytical framework in which he places the Late Roman elite is a recent study by J. Haldon, "The Fate of the Late Roman Elite: Extinction or transformation?" in J.F. Haldon, ed., *Elites Old and New in the Byzantine and*

The context

During the first decades of the seventh century the Byzantine Empire was in a situation of unrest.²⁶ In 602 Phokas overthrew and assassinated the Emperor Maurikios and tried to vanish his *genos* by killing his children. Sources report that Priscus alone or jointly with the Senate sent to the Exarch of Africa Herakleios, father of the future emperor Herakleios I, a letter that informed him about the bad political situation in Constantinople and also asked for his help.²⁷ In his turn, Herakleios responded to this call and sent his son Herakleios as well as Niketas, the son of the sub-general and patrikios Gregoras, to reach the capital and restore political stability. The agreement was that he, whoever reached Constantinople first and vanquished the tyrant, would rule the Empire.²⁸ Herakleios preferred the naval route and was the first of the two to reach the capital while Niketas took the land route and reached Constantinople after Herakleios' enthronement. This

Early Islamic Near East (The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East VI) (Princeton 2002) 178-232.

²⁶ On the reign of Herakleios, see now the important book by W.E. Kaegi, *Heraclius: Emperor of Byzantium* (Cambridge 2003).

²⁷ Priscus or Crispus - according to Patriarch Nikephoros - was one of the few commanders who retained the favor of soldiers as well as of Phokas after his enthronement. When Herakleios approached Constantinople, Priscus clandestinely negotiated with him against Phokas, his father-in-law and retained his position.

²⁸ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 295.27-296.2 (referring to the year 608/609): τούτω τῷ ἔτει ὁ Πρίσκος μὴ ὑποφέρων ὀρᾶν τοὺς τε ἀδίκους φόνους καὶ τὰ κακὰ τὰ ὑπὸ Φωκά γινόμενα ἔγραψε πρὸς Ἡράκλειον, τὸν πατριῆκιον καὶ στρατηγὸν Ἀφρικῆς, ὥστε ἀποστεῖλαι Ἡράκλειον, τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, καὶ Νικήταν, τὸν υἱὸν Γρηγοῤῥά τοῦ πατριῆκιου καὶ ὑποστρατήγου αὐτοῦ, ὅπως ἔλθωσι κατὰ τοῦ τυράννου Φωκά· ἤκουε γὰρ μελετωμένην ἐν τῇ Ἀφρικῇ κατὰ Φωκά ἀνταρσίαν.

invitation constitutes a highlight in the history of the Byzantine empire, an event that inaugurated a new period in Byzantine administration and military organization.²⁹

In addition to domestic turbulence external strife reached its peak. The Avars and Slavs were a serious threat for Byzantium at that time. In addition continuous Persian attacks were greatly increased.³⁰ Persian attacks in Armenia, Northern Syria and Upper Mesopotamia in combination with Avaro-Slavic penetration and settlements in the Balkan Peninsula were strong causes of constant social and military unrest at the beginning of Herakleios' reign.³¹ In the Fall of 613 the Persians captured

²⁹ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 297.5-10 (referring to the year 609/610) [Translation by C. Mango and R. Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284-813* (Oxford 1997) 426]; "Herakleios, *strategos* of Africa, being pressed by the Senate, equipped his son Herakleios so as to send him against the usurper Phokas. Likewise, his second-in-command, Gregoras, sent by land his son Niketas and they agreed that the one who would come first and vanquish the usurper would become emperor."

³⁰ For a description of the bad political and military conditions in Byzantium at the beginning of the reign of Herakleios for the Byzantine empire, see W. Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests* (Cambridge University Press, 1992) 31-33. Also, A. Stratos, *Tò Βυζάντιον στὸν Ζ' αἰῶνα*, *op.cit.*, 248-263; I. Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century*, 2 vols (Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection: Washington, D.C. 1995), vol. I, 634-650; W. Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Stanford 1997) 287-301. Howard-Johnston argues that the reforms of Khusrau I strengthened the Persian State: See *idem*, "The Two Great Powers in Late Antiquity: A Comparison," in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East III* (State, Resources and Armies) ed. Av. Cameron (Princeton 1995) 157-226, esp. 225-7.

³¹ See *The Miracles of St. Demetrios*, ed. P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de S. Demetrios*, 2 vols (Paris 1979 and 1981), vol. I: *Le Texte* (Paris 1979), esp. miracle thirteen from the collection of archbishop John, 133-138 and miracle two from the Anonymous' collection, 184-189. Also, Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, 41-53.

Damascus and one year later they occupied Jerusalem. Simultaneously, the Persian army under General Shahin advanced dramatically in Asia Minor.

The Persian presence as close to Constantinople as Chalcedon in 615/616 placed the capital city in a perilous position.³² Clive Foss has successfully described in a dramatic, though realistic, tone the situation in which Byzantine lands were engaged after the Persian penetration in Asia Minor:

The war therefore not only lasted a long time, but affected every part of Asia Minor, Persian attacks penetrated the whole peninsula, especially in the decade 613-23... The countryside was ravaged and the population terrorized, to judge by the hoards of coins and treasures... The cities in particular seem to have suffered... The invasions reached across Asia Minor from east to west and affected the coastal zones as much as the interior plateau: They were constant and vicious; there was hardly any place left to seek refuge. While Asia was being devastated by the Persians, Europe was overwhelmed by the hordes of the Avars. Panic and desolation struck every province of the empire, and those who feared the end of the world were in a sense justified, for the society which they and thirty generations of the ancestors had known was never to be restored.³³

Khusrau II now had the upper hand and did not wish to negotiate a peace treaty with his enfeebled enemy. On his part, Herakleios certainly wanted to conclude peace with the Persians so as to reconcile with one of his major opponents. General Shahin, who appears in some sources as the initiator of this effort by inviting a Byzantine embassy for peace, displeased the Persian

³² *Vita Anast. Persae*, ch. 5.

³³ See Foss, "The Persians in Asia Minor", 745-746, where he uses numismatic and archaeological evidence as a supplement to the heavily studied literary data of that period.

King, who purportedly punished his official for his efforts and subsequently rejected the Byzantine proposals for reconciliation.

The letter

The letter begins with the phrase: "God, who has created all things..."³⁴ and ends with the prayers of the Senate for a long-lasting good life (πολυχρόνιον εὐζωΐαν) for the Persian King.³⁵ The anonymous author of the CP refers to the letter as ἀπόκρισις (706.20) and as ἀναφορά (707.9). Ἀπόκρισις in this case means "decree (lat. *decretum*)" or even "answer" to the invitation of Shahrin for the dispatch of an embassy to Persia. Ἀναφορά in this case means "report"; however, the term "report" is valid only for the first part of the letter, which consists of a number of events that constituted a briefing of the Persian King.³⁶

The letter describes the events from the dethronement of Phokas until the accession of Herakleios in order to reveal Khusrau II that Herakleios was not responsible for Maurikios's death. Moreover, the envoys put the blame for the events on Phokas who did not follow the proper order of things, "τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς πολιτείας γενόμενος ἐπιβουλος".³⁷ It is known that

³⁴ CP 707.1-2: ὁ τὰ πάντα δημιουργήσας ... θεός.

³⁵ CP 709. 19-23: καὶ ἡμεῖς λοιπὸν... τὰς ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμετέρας πολυχρονίου εὐζωΐας τῷ θεῷ προσαγαγεῖν εὐχάς..

³⁶ CP 706.20-21: ἐπιφερόμενοι καὶ ἀποκρίσεις γραφείσας ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡμῶν πρὸς τὸν θεόπρωτον Χοσρόην. Cf. E.A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods (from B.C. 146 to A.D. 1100)* (New York-Leipzig 1888) s.v. ἀναφορά, 156 and s.v. ἀπόκρισις, 222. Concerning the structure of Byzantine public records that refer to foreign policy, see F. Dölger and J. Karayannopoulos, *Byzantinische Urkundenlehre, I. Die Kaiserurkunden in Byzantisches Handbuch* 3/1/1 (Munich 1968) esp. ch. 2: "Aussenpolitische Urkunden", 89-107.

³⁷ Phokas did send an embassy to Khusrau II at his accession. See Theoph. Simocatta, *Historia*, 8.15.2-7.

Maurikios conducted peace with Khusrau II in 590, according to which the Byzantine emperor accepted Khusrau II as his adoptive son. Revenge for Maurikios' assassination by Phokas was the pretext under which Khusrau II invaded Byzantium with the ultimate goal being the conquest of Byzantine lands.

According to the letter, the Senate, who is presented to have played the role of the state guardian, had previously selected Herakleios to replace Phokas. Herakleios refused the throne at first, though at the end he was convinced to accept it.³⁸ After the description of the political instability that followed Phokas' usurpation, the letter continued with a humiliating apology on behalf of Herakleios for the latter had not sent his credentials to the Persian king after his accession to the throne as was customary. The envoys summarized the reasons for this oversight and presented it as their own mistake, which "they hoped to redress".³⁹ According to the letter, "<senators speaking> in the preceding period the practice prevailed which, when some dispute sprang up between the two states, encouraged their respective sovereigns to resolve the points of dispute by means of communications to each other".⁴⁰ But now Herakleios did not follow this tradition and the senators hastened to provide reasons for this omission.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to accept that Herakleios was guileless in his effort to contact Persia through the embassy of 615. Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine and Egypt had fallen step-by-step to Persian hands during the second decade of the seventh

³⁸ CP 708.8-9: μόλις ταῖς αἰτήσεσιν ἡμῶν πεισθεὶς κατεδέξατο τὴν βασιλείαν. Also, Nikephoros, *Historia*, 5.10-16. The *refusatio imperii* is a *topos* in Roman imperial history.

³⁹ CP 708.13-15.

⁴⁰ CP 707.9-13 [Trans. by M. and M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, 160].

century and Herakleios was not willing to confine Byzantine territories only to the Balkan Peninsula which had also suffered by the Avaro-Slavic raids. Herakleios was aware that despite the great losses and economic devastation caused by the Persian advancement into Asia Minor there was hope for a recovery.⁴¹ In the meantime, he continued to prepare his large-scale counter-attack against the Persians. The initial victorious battle that opened his military expedition series in 622 reveals that Herakleios was preparing his military campaign against Khusrau II in terms of recruitment, military and administrative organization at the level of both troops and commanders during the 610s.⁴²

Kazhdan has argued that in the early Byzantine period Persia was not one of the "illiterate savages of the north and south" but another superpower.⁴³ The Roman and Persian empires were both powerful states with parity in the world of late antiquity.⁴⁴ There

⁴¹ In his "The Persians in Asia Minor", Foss has demonstrated that despite the disaster caused by the Persians for urban and rural Roman populations of Anatolia, the situation for Herakleios was not hopeless.

⁴² About the precise time of year 622 that the initial action of Herakleios against the Persians took place, see N. Oikonomides, "A Chronological Note on the First Persian Campaign of Heraclius (622)", *BMGS* 1 (1975) 1-9.

⁴³ Cf. A. Kazhdan, "The Notion of Byzantine Diplomacy," in *Byzantine Diplomacy*, 3-21, esp. 13. Also, E. Chrysos, "Some aspects of Roman-Persian relations," *Kleronomia* 8 (1976) 1-60, where he makes a distinction between political ideology and legal reality in Roman-Persian relationships; also, M. Whitby, "The Persian King at War" in *The Roman and Byzantine Army in the East*, ed. E. Dabrowa (Krakow 1994) 227-263, esp. 233-255. On the Byzantine-Persian status of equality in the early period, see K. Güterbock, *Byzanz und Persien in ihren diplomatisch-völkerrechtlichen Beziehungen im Zeitalter Justinians: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Völkerrechts* (Berlin 1906).

⁴⁴ For an interpretation of the Byzantine-Persian diplomatic relations in Late Antiquity, see K. Synelli, *Οι διπλωματικές σχέσεις Βυζαντίου και Περσίας έως τον Στ' αιώνα*, *Historical Monographs* 1 (Athens 1986). Synelli argues that

was mutual respect between them, which sprang primarily from sentiments of fear. The letter of 615, which names Khusrau II ἀρχιβασιλέα, was definitely motivated by the fear of Persian supremacy at that time.⁴⁵ In the diplomatic orations between Byzantium and Persia, the Persian king was perceived usually as the brother of the Byzantine emperor. This address was subject to reversion under periods of crises in favor of the Persian or the Byzantine sovereign. Thus, the Persian king could "become" the son of the Byzantine emperor and vice versa depending on who had the upper hand at the time of the particular crisis.⁴⁶

In addition to the peace proposals carried by the letter, a good and appropriate welcome for the Byzantine ambassadors was requested twice, fact that may indicate the significance of a

the relationship of the Sassanids to the Byzantines was based on equality. Also, G. Greatrex, *Rome and Persia* (Oxford 1998) and E. Winter and Beate Dignas, *Rom und das Perserreich. Zwei Weltmächte zwischen Konfrontation und Koexistenz* (Berlin 2001).

⁴⁵ CP 708.15.

⁴⁶ Kazhdan, "Byzantine Diplomacy," 13. Also Chrysos, "Roman-Persian relations," 5-24. In his letter dating in 591 Khusrau II addressed Emperor Maurikios as his son and supplicant: cf. Theoph. Simocatta, *Historia*, IV.11.11: ταῦτα Χοσρόης ἐγώ, ὡς πατρὸν, γράφων προσφθέγγομαι, Χοσρόης δὲ σὸς υἱὸς καὶ ἱκέτης. On the other hand, see CP 709.14-16: δεόμεθα δὲ τῆς ὑμετέρας ἡμερότητος καὶ Ἡράκλειον τὸν εὐσεβέστατον ἡμῶν βασιλέα γνήσιον ἔχειν τέκνον. There were also instances when there was unanimity in the titulature used in Byzantine rhetoric in diplomacy. In a letter that Kavādh-Šīroe, son and successor of Khusrau II to the Persian throne, sent to Herakleios in 628, he addressed the Byzantine emperor as brother, while, according to Oikonomides, in his response Herakleios called him son; cf. CP 735-737. Also, N. Oikonomides, "Correspondence between Herakleios and Kavādh-Šīroe in the Paschal Chronicle (628) B 41 (1971) 269-281, repr. in his *Documents et études sur les institutions de Byzance (VIIe-XVe s.)* (London 1976) XXI. On the same topic, M. and M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, *op.cit.*, 188-189 as well as Whitby, *The Emperor Maurikios and his Historian*, 204-206.

desired "fair treatment" of the envoys. The Senate begged Khusrau II to consider Herakleios his son, placing thus Byzantium in an inferior position to Persia. The author did not choose to omit the "humiliating" for the Byzantine emperor information and reverse the truth for the sake of imperial propaganda and, therefore, we should consider the letter reliable as to its basic content. However, one cannot be certain to what extent the author decided to intervene in the actual speech of the senators. One should keep in mind that a very humiliating speech made by Herakleios in front of Shahin is preserved in the *History* of Sebeos, as we shall see later. In this light, it would be interesting to examine how later sources decided to present the Byzantine embassy of 615.

The Other Sources ⁴⁷

The *Short History* of Patriarch Nikephoros, one of the main and most detailed sources that describe the embassy, does not slavishly follow the *CP*. In all probability, the learned Nikephoros had at his disposal several other sources to consult. He reproduced the *CP* only in part and seems to have elaborated on several points, whenever he found it to be necessary. For example, the *CP* describes Shahin's proposal to invite a Byzantine embassy over to the Persian court in four lines. It is amazing and puzzling that Nikephoros was able to find - or maybe invent? - the supplementary material that enabled him to dedicate forty-eight

⁴⁷ For a list of Greek and oriental sources that provide information about the Byzantine embassy of 615, see F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches (von 565-1453)*, vol. I: Regesten von 565-1025 (Munich and Berlin 1924) no. 166, 18. A.D. Also, A. Beihammer, *Nachrichten zum byzantinischen Urkundenwesen in arabischen Quellen (565-811)*, *Ποικίλα Βυζαντινά* 17 (Bonn 2000) 29-30 and S. Brock, "Syriac Sources for the Seventh Century History", *BMGS* 2 (1976) 17-36. Flusin, *St. Anastase le Perse*, 67-97, gives parallel accounts of Greek and oriental sources for the events before and after the embassy of 615.

lines of printed text to the high-flown oration that he attributed to Shahin.⁴⁸ According to Nikephoros, when Shahin saw Herakleios, the former (cf. Σάιτος)⁴⁹ prostrated himself on the ground in front of the Byzantine emperor, and delivered a speech in which he explained the benefits of peace between the Persians and the Byzantines. Ending his speech, the Persian general requested the dispatch of a Byzantine embassy and assured Herakleios about Khusrau's II interest in making peace with Byzantium.⁵⁰ The context of the letter as it is recorded in the *CP*, on the one hand, and the speech of Shahin as it is preserved in Patriarch Nikephoros' *Historia*, on the other, seem to be incompatible.⁵¹ This incompatibility is due, I believe, to the expression of the Byzantine imperial supremacy over the Persian sovereign that the Patriarch wished to perpetuate. Therefore, Nikephoros wished to emphasize that the initiative for the embassy belonged to the Persians rather than to Emperor Herakleios. Moreover, he seems or pretends to have been "unaware" of Herakleios' speech as this is recorded in Sebeos' *History*, a speech that could be considered as a personal failure of Herakleios and would blench his memory.⁵²

⁴⁸ Nikephoros, *Historia*, 6.10-53; idem, *Chronographicon*, 6:7. See P. Speck, *Das geteilte Dossier: Beobachtungen zu den Nachrichten über die Regierung des Kaisers und die seiner Söhne bei Theophanes und Nikephoros*, *Ποικίλα Βυζαντινά* 9 (Bonn 1998) 249-250.

⁴⁹ On the confusion between the words Σάην and Σάιτος, see Mango, *Nikephoros*, 176.

⁵⁰ Nikephoros, *Historia*, 6.48-53.

⁵¹ I agree with Speck, *Das geteilte Dossier*, 253, where he seems puzzled with the speech of Shahin as delivered in Nikephoros' *Historia*.

⁵² Sebeos, *Armenian History*, 78-79.

Following the same *amour propre* for the emperor, both the author of the *CP* and Patriarch Nikephoros overstress the role of the Persian general Shahin in the invitation of the Byzantine embassy to the Persian royal court. Judging by the outcome, Shahin did not have the authority to arrange negotiations for peace with the Byzantines and was not even authorized by Khusrau II to ask Herakleios for reconciliation. Shahin's assurance of the acceptance of the Byzantine peace proposals by Khusrau II was false, as also was his promise for the safety of the Byzantine envoys, if we believe Patriarch Nikephoros' account.⁵³ A number of sources, which follow the Armenian Sebeos, record that as soon the ambassadors crossed the Byzantine borders, in the first place Shahin, and later Khusrau II himself maltreated them.

The *Chronographia* of Theophanes refers to two embassies of Herakleios to king Khusrau II, neither dated in 615 as was that in the *CP*.⁵⁴ The *Chronographia* dates the first embassy in the year 612/613 (A.M. 6105). Theophanes relates that after Herakleios had seized power, he sent an embassy to Khusrau II to prevent him from killing people in Byzantine territories. Without paying much attention to Herakleios' requests Khusrau dismissed the envoys empty-handed because he hoped to conquer the Byzantine Empire in its entirety.⁵⁵ Theophanes is the only Greek source that mentions an embassy in 612/613.⁵⁶ According to a number of

⁵³ Nikephoros, *Historia*, 7.20-22.

⁵⁴ According to Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, 430-431, the first embassy may be questionable. Also, Speck, *Das geteilte Dossier*, 65-67 and 78-79. Stratos, *Βυζάντιον* I, 251.

⁵⁵ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 300.20-25. According to Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, 430 and n. 1 "the above passage concerning the dispatch of ambassadors may also derive from an Eastern source."

⁵⁶ Mango and Scott, *ibid.*, 430-431 doubt the historicity of that embassy.

eastern sources, Herakleios sent an embassy to Khusrau II immediately after his accession. However, if we believe the contemporary to the events *CP*, which preserves the official letter, no embassy from Herakleios to the Persian king was dispatched prior to the one of 615.

Returning to Theophanes, the second attempt of Herakleios to ask for peace took place in 616/617 (A.M. 6109), one year after the consulship (ὑπατεία) of the emperor's son Herakleios-Neos Konstantinos.⁵⁷ The embassy proved ineffectual as the previous one. This was the last embassy of Herakleios to the Persians before he initiated war against them. After the dismissal of the ambassadors, Herakleios decided to focus on his "Persian Wars". He made peace with the Khan of the Avars and concentrated his military powers on the eastern front.⁵⁸

The letter to Khusrau II reveals an ostensibly friendly disposition towards the Persian king and definitively predates the engagement in military operations that were about to come. The *CP* provides the following information concerning the date of the letter: γράφεται τῆς βασιλείας Ἡρακλείου νέου Κωνσταντίνου ἔτος γ'.⁵⁹ Given that both Theophanes and the *CP* date the embassy after the first consulship of Herakleios-Neos Konstantinos, and just before the beginning of hostilities between Khusrau II and Herakleios, then Theophanes and the author of the *CP* describe the same embassy, though with a two-year difference. In all probability Theophanes was vaguely informed about this embassy, however, he did not want to omit an event of

⁵⁷ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 301.21-22: Τούτῳ τῷ ἔτει πάλιν Ἡράκλειος ἀπέστειλε πρέσβεις ἐν Περσίδι πρὸς Χοσρόην αἰτούμενος εἰρήνην. ὁ δὲ Χοσρόης καὶ πάλιν αὐτοὺς ἀπεπέμψατο.

⁵⁸ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 302.25-30.

⁵⁹ *CP* 705.

such great importance, although he decided not to provide a detailed account.⁶⁰ He copied a source contemporary to the embassy, maybe the *CP* itself, though was confused and not well informed about issues of chronology as well as about persons and facts.⁶¹ The Armenian historian Sebeos writes that Herakleios, after his coronation sent an embassy to Khusrau II with many gifts asking for peace. This embassy, which Sebeos dates in the first year of Herakleios' reign (610) coincides with the one which appears in Theophanes in 612 (A.M. 6105). In his description of the events, Sebeos writes:

"When Herakleios became king he sent messengers with splendid treasures and letters to king Khosrov to request peace in a most solicitous manner. King Khosrov was quite unwilling to heed him, saying: 'That kingdom is mine, and I established T'ëodos, son of Maurikios, as a king. But this one has become king without our permission and offers us our own treasure as a gift. However, I shall not desist until I have taken him in my grasp.' Taking the treasure, he ordered the messengers to be killed, and made no response to his proposals."⁶²

⁶⁰ For a discussion of problems of chronology in the compilation of rubrics in the *Chronographia*, see Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, lxiii-lxxiv.

⁶¹ For example, Mango and Scott, *ibid.*, 433 and n. 1 observe that "Theoph. is alone in recording under two separate years (a) an abortive siege of Chalcedon, and (b) its capture.

⁶² See Sebeos, *Armenian History*, ch. 34 (trans. by R.W. Thomson). In contradiction to the Greek sources, the oriental ones (Agapios, Bar Hebraeus, Michael the Syrian and Thomas Artsruni) write that the first embassy of Herakleios to Khusrau II occurred immediately after his accession to the throne. A. Stratos, *Tò Βυζάντιον*, I, 250 and A. Pernice, *L' Imperatore Eraclio: Saggio di storia bizantina* (Florence 1905) 73, reject the possibility of a Byzantine embassy to Khusrau II immediately after Herakleios' coronation.

One may compare the words of Khusrau II in the History of Sebeos to Theophanes' account on Herakleios' first embassy to the Persian king. In the passage of Theophanes, Khusrau II is presented as laying claim on the Byzantine throne: ἐλπίζων τελείως παραλαβεῖν τὴν τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχήν.⁶³ The content of the two passages is similar, if not identical. This leads us to believe that Theophanes draws much upon the Armenian Sebeos. Since it is highly unlikely that Theophanes could read Armenian, it is possible that Sebeos and Theophanes made use of the same oriental source.⁶⁴ The reliance of the author of the *Chronographia* on oriental sources and the details it records on the eastern provinces is obvious throughout his work.⁶⁵

There is an additional inconsistency among the sources as regards the fate of Shahin and of the Byzantine envoys. Unlike the silence in the CP on this issue, Patriarch Nikephoros writes that after the ambassadors suffered several adversities by Shahin

⁶³ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 300.21-25.

⁶⁴ The issue of the sources that Theophanes used is particularly complicated. Whitby, "The Great Chronographer and Theophanes", *BMGS* 8 (1982/3) 1-20 argues that the lost Great Chronographer was the major source of Theophanes. On the contrary, Ljubarskij, "ФЕОФАН ИСПОВЕДНИК И ИСТОЧНИКИ ЕГО «ХРОНОГРАФИИ»", *Viz Vrem* 45 (1984) 72-86 believes that Theophanes used early Byzantine historians and chroniclers in order to provide his own composition. According to C. Mango, "Who wrote the Chronicle of Theophanes?" *Zbornik Radova* 18 (1978) 11, "Theophanes was not a man of much culture." On Theophanes' literary and historical debts, see A. Proudfoot, "The Sources of Theophanes for the Heraclian Dynasty," *Byzantion* 44 (1974) 367-439.

⁶⁵ See Lawrence Conrad, "Theophanes and the Arabic Historical Tradition: Some Indications of Intercultural Transmission" *BF* 15 (1990) 1-44. On the issue of the sources used by Theophanes in his work, see Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, lxxiv-lxxx.

(despite his initial promises), Khusrau, in his turn, imprisoned them and made them go through great calamities.⁶⁶ The *CP*, which is, I believe, the most trustworthy source on this matter makes no mention of a maltreatment or the fate of the ambassadors in general, whatever this might be. As for Sahin, Nikephoros writes that Khusrau II had him flayed alive and, therefore, died a painful and violent death.⁶⁷ *CP* does not refer to the fate of Shahin at all. Theophanes does not seem to be in accordance with Nikephoros on this point; he records two embassies dispatched by Herakleios during the first years of his reign and in none of them does he mention any maltreatment of the Byzantine envoys on the Persian part. Instead, he writes that in both embassies Khusrau II dismissed the Byzantine delegates back to Constantinople.⁶⁸ The fate of the ambassadors constitutes a contradiction between Theophanes and Sebeos. I assume, therefore, that despite Sebeos' and Theophanes' concurrence regarding several aspects of the embassy, it is more probable that

⁶⁶ Nikephoros, *Historia*, 7.20-22: Ῥωμαίων δὲ τοὺς πρεσβευτὰς ἰδίᾳ διαστείλας ὡς ἕκαστον φρουραῖς ἀσφαλεστάταις ἀπέθετο καὶ ἐνάκου τὰ μέγιστα. *PLRE* IIB, 954, holds the view that the envoys were arrested, imprisoned and died in captivity.

⁶⁷ Nikephoros, *Historia*, 7.15-20: Χοσρόης δὲ ἐπεὶ ἔγνω ὡς Σάϊτος Ἡράκλειον ὡς βασιλέα εἶδε τε καὶ τετίμηκεν... πικρὸν αὐτῷ καὶ βίαιον καταστήσας θάνατον. Cf. Mango, *Nikephoros*, 177: "The punishment of Shahin is a fable. He remained in service for another ten or eleven years and is said to have died of grief after being defeated by Theodore in 626." Flusin in his *St. Anastase le Perse*, vol. II, 91-92, seems to have the same opinion as Mango on this issue. Also, M. and M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, 160 and n. 443. This view is supported by Treadgold, *History*, 291.

⁶⁸ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 301.21.23 and *ibid.*, 300.24-25.

they both use a common source than to accept that Theophanes copies Sebeos.⁶⁹

The inconsistency that arose among the Greek sources on this issue depends much on the archetype that later sources copy.⁷⁰ Eastern accounts such as that of Bar Hebraeus and Michael the Syrian draw upon the seventh-century *History* by the Armenian bishop Sebeos. As for Patriarch Nikephoros, whatever his source may be, his account is based, I believe, on exaggeration in an effort to perpetuate the Byzantine imperial propaganda.⁷¹ He exaggerates the role of Shahin in the invitation for the embassy from the Byzantine part and disregards Herakleios' "humiliating" speech to Shahin, which is preserved in the *Armenian History* of Sebeos.⁷² Following the same mode of exaggeration, he may have also made up the story about the fate of the Byzantine envoys in order to show the dishonesty of the Persian side. As for Theophanes, it is highly possible that he used a number of sources to provide his own summary, among which the *CP* and probably another written or oral source of eastern provenance formed the

⁶⁹ Based on the description of the siege of Nisibis (AM 5841), Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, lxxx, have reached the same conclusion.

⁷⁰ George the Monk, *Chronicon*, ed. C. de Boor, vol. 2, vol. II (Leipzig 1904) 668.12-669.6 follows Nikephoros. Michael Glycas, *Annales*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn 1836) 512.3-8 follows George the Monk; Leo Grammatikos, *Chronographia*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn 1842) 149.16-150.3 combines the *Chronicle* of Theophanes with that of George the Monk.

⁷¹ Mango, *Nikephoros*, 177, successfully uses the term *amour propre* for Nikephoros' attitude towards the emperor.

⁷² Sebeos, *Armenian History*, vol. I, 78-79 and vol. II, 210-213, where a detailed commentary by J. Howard-Johnston.

basis for his account; in no case but not exclusively Sebeos' *History*.⁷³

Conclusion

In a difficult political period for the Byzantine Empire, an embassy consisting of three senators delivered Khusrau II a letter of high importance. The text of the letter is recorded in the *Chronicon Paschale* and no other source copies or partially reproduces it. However, the mention of this embassy and the rejection of its proposals by the Persian King in a number of contemporary or later sources signify its importance in early seventh-century politics. It is true that this embassy casts light on the relationship between Byzantium and Persia and reveals the interest of later historians in the reproduction of the event. Even more interesting is the variety of historical writing among authors given their different backgrounds and audiences. Byzantine historians were eager to interpolate the original text in view of their interests and the positions they held in the ecclesiastical or court administration.

The content of the letter was humiliating for the Byzantine emperor, though not without good reason. Herakleios needed to present his credentials to the Persian king at a very crucial moment for the Byzantine government and he did so by issuing a letter in which he submitted his peace propositions. The letter was ostensibly composed by the Senate but was actually written by the imperial chancery in cooperation with individual senators. Herakleios proposed peace, though his ultimate goal was to receive a confirmation of allegiance from Khusrau II and to gain time to organize his counter-attack. Khusrau was aware of the difficult situation in which the Byzantine emperor was involved

⁷³ Proudfoot, "Sources of Theophanes", 393-394, believes that for these events Theophanes used the *History* of Sebeos and *CP*.

and he did not accept the proposal because he coveted the Byzantine empire.

Even though it is definite that Herakleios was behind this initiative, the letter presents no interference by Herakleios, because he did not want to seem apologetic to a sovereign of an enemy state. A different explanation may be that Khusrau II did not want to talk directly to the new emperor. He considered Herakleios an illegitimate emperor and a usurper, since the latter did not dispatch in a timely manner the credentials to the Persian King as he should have.⁷⁴ Therefore, being in despair, Herakleios made an effort to begin negotiations through the Senate, the only otherwise legal constitutional body, that had the ultimate authority in periods when there was a gap in government and administration. The Armenian Sebeos does not wish to follow the documentation given by *CP* on this point, while Nikephoros, carried away by his conscious or unconscious "love" for the emperor in conformity with Byzantine political thought, wishes to protect Herakleios' memory.

The Senate attempted to persuade Khusrau II that he and his empire would be treated with even greater respect by Herakleios than they had been treated by the murdered Maurikios and wished to announce to the Persian king that the coronation of Herakleios was legitimate and absolutely acceptable to the people of Byzantium. The language that the Senate applied in this letter aimed at revealing to Khusrau II the care of the new emperor for his people. The use of "we" (ἡμεῖς) does not indicate only the three envoys but rather the body of the Senate and – why not ? – the Byzantine people.

The purpose of the three ambassadors, who acted on behalf of the Senate, was to introduce the new emperor to the Persian king. They wished to legitimize the emperor and express the friendly

⁷⁴ See M. and M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, 162 and note 444, where they support this view.

sentiments of the Byzantine people and of the Senate towards him and his governance.⁷⁵ There is no doubt that the Senate played a decisive role in the events of 615. Nonetheless, the position of the Senate in the seventh century was subject to several changes. In 615 Herakleios was a newly proclaimed emperor and still needed support and power from the Senate; later in his reign he appears to have subordinated it to his power. The Senate regained some of its power during the succession crisis of 641/2 after Herakleios had passed away. It castrated Heraclonas, expelled him and his mother Martina and helped Constans II (641-668), grandson of Herakleios, to establish his power. Constans asked the Senate to assist him in the government and sent gifts to the senators.⁷⁶ However, his high esteem for the Senate does not seem to have lasted for long. In the course of his reign, Constans deprived himself more and more of its influence and the Senate was pushed to the background once again.

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⁷⁵ Stratos, *Βυζάντιον* I, 224 states that the senators were fond of the emperor Herakleios because they could possibly have some influence on him in the future.

⁷⁶ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 342.18.20.

DAS FEINDBILD DER PETSCHENEGEN IM BYZANZ DER KOMNENEN (11./12. JH.)

Eine Betrachtung zum Thema "Das Feindbild der Petschenegen im Byzanz der Komnenen (11./12. Jh.)" ist von dreifachem Interesse: Erstens, historisch gesehen, waren die von den Byzantinern genannten *Patzinakitai* (abgeleitet vom türkischen Wort "*păčănäg*" = Schwager [-Stamm]) heidnische Reiternomaden, die sich seit dem Ende des 9. Jahrhunderts im Gebiet der heutigen Staaten Ukraine und Rumänien aufhielten. In der zweiten Hälfte des 11. und der ersten des 12. Jahrhunderts hatte dieses Steppenvolk die Donau als gemeinsame Grenze mit Byzanz und war dadurch zur Hauptbedrohung, ja zum Reichsfeind Nummer eins der Rhomäer auf der Balkanhalbinsel geworden.¹ Von 1086 bis 1091 kam es im Raum zwischen Donau und Konstantinopel (also im heutigen Ostbulgarien und der europäischen Türkei) zu langwierigen und aufreibenden Kriegsoperationen der Byzantiner gegen die immer wieder in ihr Territorium einfallenden Petschenegen. Doch erst mit Hilfe der Kumanen aus der südrussischen Steppe, eines weiteren türkischen Nomadenvolkes, gelang es im Jahre 1091 Kaiser Alexios I. (1081—1118), dem Begründer der Komnenen-Dynastie, die Petschenegen bei Lebunion (im unteren Tal des Flusses Maritza) entscheidend zu schlagen. Als dann nach längerer Pause 1122 erneut petschenegische Verbände Makedonien und Thrakien plünderten, war es Kaiser Johannes II. (1118—1143), der den Gegner bei Beroe (heute: Stara Zagora in Ostbulgarien) vollständig besiegte, so

¹ Nachdem die Petschenegen sowohl Paristrion an der Donau zur Basis ihrer Expeditionen gemacht hatten als auch mit dem revoltierenden inneren Gegner von Byzanz, dem Manichäer und Bogomilen Traulos, eine Koalition eingegangen waren, wurden sie 1086 zu einer tödlichen Bedrohung für Byzanz, vergleichbar mit der bulgarischen im 10./11. Jahrhundert.

dass dieser Gegner als Volk unterging.² Dieser Erfolg war für Byzanz so bedeutend, dass nach dem Chronisten Niketas Choniates noch gegen Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts alljährlich das sogen. "Fest der Petschenegen" gefeiert wurde.³

Zweitens, was das philologische und weltanschauliche Interesse betrifft, vermitteln historische und rhetorische Quellen im Zusammenhang mit diesen Ereignissen auch Angaben über die *Vorstellung* der Petschenegen bei den Byzantinern.⁴

Drittens, angeregt von der Mediävistik, rückt seit dem Ende des letzten Jahrhunderts auch in der Byzantinistik die *Mentalitätsforschung* immer mehr in den Mittelpunkt. Während für das 11. und 12. Jahrhundert besonders die westlichen Nationen, vorab die Normannen, die Neugier der Historiker wecken, werden die Turkvölker der Steppe vernachlässigt.⁵

Methodisch gesehen wollen wir die sprachlich-stilistischen Elemente und die inhaltlichen Strukturen des negativen Fremdbildes, d. h. des *Feindbildes*, der Petschenegen herausarbeiten. In Anlehnung an Stephan Schmals Monographie "Feindbilder bei den frühen Griechen" (1995) und an Klaus Roths ethnologischen Aufsatz "Bilder in den Köpfen" (1998) verstehen wir unter einem Feindbild eine *aktionsleitende Vorstellung des Gegenübers*, die auf *kognitiven Stereotypen*

² Da das Rhomäerreich jahrelange von den Petschenegen ununterbrochen bedroht wurde, selbst zur Winterszeit, suchten die Byzantiner die Vernichtung dieser Armeen. S. Anne Comnène, Alexiade (règne de l'empereur Alexis I Comnène 1081—1118). Texte établi et traduit par B. Leib, I—III, Paris 1937—1945 (im Folgenden zit.: Alexias), II 89, 15—21, 143.

³ Nicetae Choniatae Historia, ed. J. A. Van Diten [CFHB XI/1], Berlin — New York 1975 (im Folgenden zit.: Nik. Chon.), 16, 11 ff.

⁴ Zu den Quellen s. u.

⁵ Abgesehen vom Aufsatz von Elisabeth Malamut (L'image byzantine des Petchénègues, in: BZ 88, 1995, 105—147) sind die Petschenegen bislang v. a. unter politischen und demographischen Aspekten hinsichtlich des byzantinisch-bulgarischen und pontischen Raums des 9.—12. Jahrhunderts untersucht worden, so beispielsweise in: Schreiner, P., Die Rolle der Turkvölker in der byzantinischen Reichspolitik, in: Materialia Turcica 9 (1983) 10—21.

und *affektiven Einstellungen* beruht.⁶ In der vorliegenden Untersuchung wird das positive Fremdbild, das sogen "Freundbild", das Teile der Petschenegen als Söldner und Siedler im Byzantinischen Reich thematisiert, nicht behandelt. Wir konzentrieren uns also auf den Ausländer, den *ausser Landes stehenden Fremden*, den heidnischen Reichsnachbarn und Bewohner der byzantinischen Aussenwelt. Dabei interessiert uns, wie dieser Fremde aus der Perspektive Konstantinopels, genauer von Intellektuellen mit einem hohen sozialen Status und einem hoch entwickelten Bewusstsein ihrer nationalen Identität, *gesehen* wurde.

Das Feindbild lässt sich auf drei Ebenen untersuchen: Erstens ist es der *militärische Ursprung*, d. h. entweder die reale Eventualität eines Kampfes oder die echte krieglerische Auseinandersetzung. Zweitens ist es die *kognitive Ebene* des "*Bildes*", die alle Arten von *Stereotypen* in deren verschiedenen sprachlichen Formen (wie Klischees, Topoi, Sprichwörter usw.) vereint.⁷ Mit Stereotypen sind gemeint: *vereinfachte Repräsentationen, reduzierte bildhafte Wahrnehmungen* der Umwelt (sogen. "kognitive Schemata", z. B. Barbarenbild). Es sind *verfestigte Überzeugungen*, die in *generalisierender* Weise und mit emotional wertender Tendenz einem Subjekt bestimmte Eigenschaften oder Verhaltensweisen zu- oder absprechen. Bei der Stereotypisierung ist es wichtig, dass zwischen der *Normalität* der Eigengruppe (der

⁶ Roth, "Bilder in den Köpfen". Stereotypen, Mythen, Identitäten aus ethnologischer Sicht, in: Das Bild vom Anderen. Identitäten, Mentalitäten, Mythen und Stereotypen in multiethnischen europäischen Regionen, hg. V. Heuberger, A. Suppan, E. Vyslonzil, Frankfurt a. M.—Berlin 1998, 21—43, hier 23 f.; Schmal, St., Feindbilder bei den frühen Griechen. Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung von Fremdbildern und Identitäten in der griechischen Literatur von Homer bis Aristophanes, Frankfurt a. M.—Berlin—Bern—New York—Paris—Wien 1995, hier 10—18, 29 (der Autor beruft sich auf: Allport, Estel, Mueller/Thomas, Secord, Bleibtreu-Ehrenberg, Hofstätter und Duijker/Frijda; zu den bibliographischen Angaben s. d.).

⁷ Hier und im Folgenden: Roth, ebd. 30—32; Schmal, ebd. 10—15; Schmid, J., Die Wahrnehmung des Anderen. Sozialpsychologische Anmerkungen zu Ethnozentrismus und Marginalisierung, in: Fremde der Gesellschaft, hg. von M. Th. Fögen, Frankfurt a. M. 1991, 147—167, hier bes. 147 f.

Rhomäer) und der *Nichtnormalität* der Fremdgruppe (der Petschenegen) unterschieden wird. In unserem Fall muss die Bezugnahme der Autoren auf ihre eigenen Normen aus dem Kontext erst erschlossen werden. Die dritte Ebene des Feindbildes betrifft dessen identitätsstiftende Funktion, mithin die *Rückwirkung* bzw. *Wechselwirkung* zur *eigenen* Seite besonders im ideellen und politischen Sinne.⁸ *Identität* ist ein Konstrukt, das durch gruppen-stiftende stereotype Merkmale definiert wird. Nach der Gruppentheorie (dem sogen. "ingroup-outgroup"-Modell von Sumner, 1906⁹) handelt es sich bei der *Eigengruppe* um Personen mit dem Gefühl von *Zusammengehörigkeit* und *gleicher Identität*. Dieses Empfinden kann durch den äusseren *Feind* (sei er real oder fiktiv) zusätzlich gestärkt werden. Zur Fremdgruppe dagegen gehören Subjekte mit bestimmten Merkmalen, die sie von der Eigengruppe unterscheiden.¹⁰

Diese Überlegungen führen uns zu den folgenden drei Fragen: 1. Welches sind die sprachlich-stilistischen Elemente und inhaltlichen Strukturen des Feindbildes der Petschenegen bei den Byzantinern? 2. Inwieweit ist im Kontext des Petschenegen-Bildes das Selbstverständnis der Rhomäer erkennbar? 3. Wie dürfen wir die Wahrnehmungsbereitschaft der Byzantiner gegenüber den Petschenegen beurteilen? Welche Rolle spielt die Rhetorik in unseren Texten?

1. Sprachlich-stilistische Elemente und inhaltliche Strukturen des Petschenegen-Bildes

Zunächst ein Wort zu den Quellen. Wir berücksichtigen in erster Linie das literarische Geschichtswerk 'Αλεξιάς von Anna Komnene (1083—1153/54), das als die wichtigste Quelle für die Beziehungen von Byzanz unter Kaiser Alexios I. zu den Petschenegen gilt (1086—

⁸ Hier und im Folgenden: Schmal, ebd. 17 f.; Roth, ebd. 36.

⁹ Sumner, W. G., Folkways, 4. Auflage, New York 1960 (1. Auflage, Boston 1906), 12 f.

¹⁰ Schmal, ebd. 19—21.

91).¹¹ Sodann haben wir für die Herrschaftszeit Kaiser Johannes' II. (1122) zwei historische Werke, nämlich die 'Επιτομή von *Johannes Kinnamos* (1143—1203)¹² und die Χρονική διήγησις des *Niketas Choniates* (ca. 1155—1215/16)¹³. Für unser Thema ebenfalls aufschlussreich erweist sich ein *Enkomion* (eine Lobrede — ein sogen. Λόγος βασιλικός) von *Theophylaktos von Ochrid* (um 1050—nach 1126) an Kaiser Alexios von 1088.¹⁴ In allen Fällen handelt es sich um gebildete Autoren des 11.—13. Jahrhunderts. Sie waren Mitglieder entweder des Hofes (wie Anna, die Tochter von Alexios), des hohen Klerus (wie Theophylaktos, Erzbischof von Ochrid) oder der hohen Verwaltung (wie Johannes Kinnamos: βασιλικός γραμματικός [kaiserlicher Sekretär] und Niketas Choniates: λογοθέτης τοῦ γενικοῦ [Finanz- und Steuerwesen]; beide unter Kaiser Manuel I.).

Was die *Ethnie* betrifft, werden die Petschenegen weniger mit der Selbstbezeichnung "Patzinakitai"¹⁵ als vielmehr als sogen. "Skythen" (Σκύθαι)¹⁶ und "Barbaren" (βάρβαροι)¹⁷ genannt, die laut Anna angeblich "Skythisch" (Σκυτική διάλεκτος)¹⁸ sprachen. Neben dem Ethnonym erscheinen auch Namen von *Stammesführern* (ἄρχοντες, ἡγεμόνες, φύλαρχοι; z. B. Tatu [Chales] und Tzelgu).¹⁹ Dieses Volk von Nomaden verbrachte zeit seines Lebens auf Wagen und war in

¹¹ Alexias.

¹² Ioannis Cinnami Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Manuele Comnenis gestarum, ed. A. Meineke, Bonn 1836 (im Folgenden zit.: Io. Kinn.).

¹³ Nik. Chon.

¹⁴ Gautier, P., Le discours de Théophylacte de Bulgarie à l'autocrator Alexis Ier Comnène (6 janvier 1088), in: Revue des Études Byzantines XX (1962) 93—130 (im Folgenden zit.: Gautier, Theophylaktos).

¹⁵ Alexias II 95, 102, 103, 109, 137, 4, 139, 140; VII 3, 4, 12; 4, 2, 3; 7, 3; 8, 1; VIII 4, 3.

¹⁶ Ebd. II 83—109, 116—137; VI 14, 1—VII 1, 2; VII 3, 4, 12; 5, 1—VIII 6, 2 passim u. a.; Nik. Chon. 13, 14.

¹⁷ Alexias II 84 f., 88, 8.13, 93, 123 f.; VIII 2, 5; Nik. Chon. 14.

¹⁸ Alexias II 117, 30.

¹⁹ Ebd. VI 14, 1; VII 1, 1—2; 3, 3; 5, 1.

Stämme (γένος) gegliedert, von denen einige mit Byzanz verbündet, andere dagegen verfeindet waren.²⁰ Von ihrem Charakter und ihrer Moral wird berichtet, dass die Petschenegen wie alle Völker des Nordens von Natur aus geldgierig und unersättlich gewesen wären.²¹ Nach Anna sind der Verrat, das (wiederholte) Überlaufen (der Frontwechsel; αὐτόμολος [Neantzes]) und — wohl mit Bezug auf Herodot²² — das Enthaupten typisch für eine sogen. "Barbarensseele" ("πράγμα βαρβαρικῆς ψυχῆς ἄξιον")^{23, 24} Die Petschenegen sollen ferner arrogant und prahlerisch (μεγαλαυχία, κόμπος)²⁵, ebenso hinterhältig und wankelmütig gewesen sein, wie sagt doch Anna Komnene an einschlägiger Stelle: "Ἀστατεῖ γὰρ ὥς ἐπίπαν ἅπαν τὸ βάρβαρον καὶ σπονδὰς φυλάττειν οὐ πέφυκε." (d. h.: "Denn das ganze Barbarenvolk ist fast immer wankelmütig und von Natur aus nicht in der Lage, einen Vertrag einzuhalten.")²⁶

Dagegen meint der *rhetor* und *episkopos* Theophylaktos in seinem Enkomion, dass sich die Petschenegen seit dem Friedensvertrag von 1087 unterscheiden würden von dem, was allgemein von einem barbarischen Volk erwartet wurde. Sie wären besser geworden und würden nun überlegt handeln. Ausserdem hätte früher die Strategie der Petschenegen noch jede Repressalie herausgefordert. "Damals waren die Skythen [gemeint: Petschenegen] schnell und nicht zu fassen, sie versteckten sich hinter Felsen und waren unsichtbar." Weiter verwendet Theophylaktos verschiedene Klischees der Vergangenheit bzgl. ihrer Unfähigkeit, Verträge zu respektieren und ihres natürlichen

²⁰ Bezogen auf: Herodot, Historien, deutsche Gesamtausgabe, übersetzt von A. Horneffer, neu herausgegeben und erläutert von H. W. Haussig mit einer Einleitung von W. F. Otto, 2. Auflage, Stuttgart 1971 (im Folgenden zit.: Herodot), IV 64 f.; Nik. Choniates 14, 16; Io. Kinn. 7, 19, 8.

²¹ Alexias II 106; Nik. Chon. 10, 14—19, 14, 54 f.

²² Herodot IV 46, 121.

²³ Alexias II 118, 11.

²⁴ Ebd. 116, 24 u. a.

²⁵ Nik. Chon. 14, 44.

²⁶ Alexias II 106, 26 f.

Hanges, mit Grausamkeit Krieg zu führen.²⁷ Die Petschenegen wären sonderbar, (hart) wie Stein (ὁ πέτρος) und Eiche (ἡ δρῦς) gewesen, kein Schlag hätte ihnen etwas ausgemacht.²⁸ Sie mochten keine Ruhe und verachteten die Müssigkeit.²⁹ Als Barbaren wären sie doppelzünftig gewesen, doch nachdem sie ihren Wunsch nach Frieden bekundet hatten, verneigten sie sich vor dem göttlichen Charakter des *basileus* (1087).³⁰ Da nun die Petschenegen eine rechtmässige Abstimmung (δικαία ψήφος) getroffen hatten, waren sie nach Theophylaktos "οὐ βάρβαροι, οὐδὲ Σκύθαι", d. h. "keine Barbaren und auch keine Skythen mehr". Es scheint uns, dass ein barbarisches Volk — so auch die Petschenegen — nichts Rechtmässiges tun konnte, da dies offenbar nur den Römern vorbehalten war.³¹

Im Zusammenhang mit der *militärischen* Struktur sprechen die historischen Quellen von den Skythen als den Feinden (ἐχθροί) der Rhomäer.³² Es fällt auf, dass immer wieder die Grösse des Heeres, die nach Anna "von Stunde zu Stunde zunehmende Zahl"³³ hervorgehoben wird, mit der sich die quantitativ unterlegenen byzantinischen Truppen stets konfrontiert sahen. Nach Theophylaktos soll — in Anspielung auf Homer, Ilias 2, 87 — "die Zahl der Petschenegen diejenige der Bienen (μέλισσαι) im Frühling übertroffen haben".³⁴ Die zahlenmässige Übermacht, die zudem nicht exakt fassbar war und die sich immer zu erneuern schien, löste bei den Byzantinern mehr als nur Respekt aus, ja schüchterte die rhomäische Armee ein. Die Angst ist generell einer der

²⁷ Gautier, Theophylaktos 6—7.

²⁸ Ebd. 7, 1.14 f.

²⁹ Ebd. 7, 17 ff.

³⁰ Ebd. 8, 11 ff.

³¹ Ebd. 7—10.

³² Alexias II 12, 17.

³³ Ebd. II 119, 12 f.

³⁴ Gautier, Theophylaktos 7, 22 f. 24 f.

wesentlichen Faktoren des byzantinischen Feindbildes.³⁵ Das Thema der "ungeheuren Menge" wird geradezu zum Leitmotiv in der Literatur, aber war auch eine Realität im byzantinischen Bewusstsein.³⁶ Hinsichtlich ihrer *Kriegführung* stellten sich die sogen. "Skythen" laut Anna Komnene "in Schlachtordnung auf, da sie ja aus einer ihnen von Natur aus innewohnenden Kenntnis heraus wissen, eine Schlacht zu schlagen und sich in Schlachtreihen zu formieren".³⁷ Weiter hören wir, dass sich das Heer nicht entzweiten liess und neben Plünderungen und Verwüstungen auch Massaker anrichtete, ja alles zerstörte, was ihm in den Weg kam. Nach Ansicht unserer Geschichtsschreiber war der hohe Grad an militärischer Fähigkeit und Gefährlichkeit der Petschenegen durch verschiedene Faktoren bedingt wie: angeborene Wildheit und Ausdauerfähigkeit, ebenso Kampfesmut, Unberechenbarkeit und Keckheit sowie durch den barbarischen Schrei.³⁸ In ihrer Widerstandsfähigkeit waren die Petschenegen nach Niketas Choniates "ausdauerhafter als ein Volk von Heuschrecken [ἀκρίς]".³⁹ An anderer Stelle meint er, dass die Petschenegen schlimmer als eine Heuschreckenplage gewesen wären.⁴⁰ All diesen Verhaltensweisen vermochte Kaiser Alexios nach Annas Worten nur mit τέχνη (d. h. Kriegskunst) zu begegnen. Die ausserordentliche Beweglichkeit und respekteinflössende Schnelligkeit der sogen. "Skythen" sind ein immer wiederkehrendes Bildmotiv. So beispielsweise sagt Anna im Zusammenhang mit der aussichtslosen Verfolgung der Petschenegen durch die Byzantiner bei Philippupolis (heute: Plovdiv) (1086) wörtlich: "ἀλλὰ πεζός φασι παρὰ λυδίων ἄρμα" (d. h.: "wie das Sprichwort sagt, 'zu

³⁵ Alexias II 83, 6 f., 84, 85, 7, 87, 4 (allerdings: Zahl von 80'000 erwähnt), 98, 20 f. (36'000), 107, 1.18, 135 f., 140 f., 141, 25, 143, 144; VII 6, 5 (so riesige Scharen), VIII 2, 5; Nik. Chon. 14; Io. Kinn. 7.

³⁶ Alexias II 98, 117, 135, 141, 143; Nik. Chon. 15, 16; Io. Kinn. 8.

³⁷ Alexias II 97, 22

³⁸ Ebd. II 84, 116, 119, 123, 124, 23, 130, 23, 143; VII 3, 12; VIII 3, 1.

³⁹ Nik. Chon. 13, 40 f.

⁴⁰ Ebd. 10, 3 ff.

Fuss im Wettstreit mit einem lydischen Wagen".⁴¹ Gemeint ist, dass die Byzantiner nicht über genügend Kavallerie verfügten, um die Petschenegen zu verfolgen. Wohl wiederum in Anlehnung an Herodot (IV 46, 121) meint Theophylaktos, dass die Petschenegen "wie der Blitz" angriffen und sich schnell zurückzogen; wenn sie angriffen, liessen sie keine einzige Information ihren Verfolgern zurück.⁴² Mit anderen Worten: Die Petschenegen konnten nicht gefangen genommen werden.

In *kriegsdiplomatischer* Hinsicht entnehmen wir der Alexias, dass sich bei den Petschenegen scheinbare Friedensverhandlungen in der Tat als Kriegslist entpuppten, wie Täuschung generell als Mittel ihrer Diplomatie angesehen wurde. Im Fall des Friedensbruchs der Petschenegen von 1089 versteigt sich Anna gar zum sprichwörtlichen Vergleich: "[Σκύθαι]...ἀλλ' αὐτοὶς πρὸς τὸν ἴδιον ἔμετον ὡς κύνες ἐστράφησαν." (d. h.: "[Die Skythen] kehrten wieder wie Hunde zu ihrem Erbrochenen zurück.").⁴³

Dieser *Bilderbogen* führt uns zu folgenden vier Beobachtungen: Erstens, in keinem der historischen Werke finden wir ein ausführliches Bild der Petschenegen. Am kompaktesten erscheint uns das *archaisierende* Bild der sogen. "Skythen" im Enkomion des Theophylaktos.⁴⁴ In der Regel liegen lediglich einzelne Aussagen in Form von Ethnonymen und Attributen, von Klischees, Topoi, Vergleichen und Sprichwörtern vor. Die Vorstellung der Petschenegen wird mit Ver-

⁴¹ Alexias II 85; 96, 1 ff. Buckler, G., Anna Comnena, A study, Oxford 1929 (ND 1968), 378, 435, 438.

⁴² Theophylaktos 7 (111 resp. 123).

⁴³ Alexias II 92, 17.25, 108, 3 ff., 123, 17—18, 139, 19.

⁴⁴ In seiner panegyrischen Rede an den Kaiser von 1088 kommt Theophylaktos auf die West-, Ost- und Innenpolitik des Reiches zu sprechen. Im Rahmen der Westpolitik nimmt er Bezug auf die Schlacht bei Dristra (1087: Byzantiner Sieger) und stellt die Petschenegen (Skythen, Verlierer) dem Alexios (Rhomaier, Sieger) gegenüber. Er setzt zuerst das Fremdbild (Volk-bezogen), anschliessend formuliert er das Eigenbild (Kaiser-bezogen).

gleichen besonders aus der *Tierwelt* (Bienen [Unglückszeichen, Waffe — d. A.], Heuschrecken, Hunde [Symbol des Gemeinen, Dreisten — d. A.]) versinnbildlicht. Gerade die *Tiermetaphorik* mit ihrer *negativen* Nuancierung bezweckt eine *Entwertung* des Gegners. Dadurch wird die Charakteristik mit geradezu dichterischer Eindringlichkeit vertieft. Die wiederholt auftretenden Elemente lassen sich thematisch grob in die Bereiche *Politik, Religion, Ethnie, Sprache* und *Kultur* einordnen. Es handelt sich hier um Faktoren eines *Fremdbildes*. Doch mit den ausgesprochen negativen und affektiven Zügen der militärischen und diplomatischen Struktur entwickelt sich das Feindbild zu einem *Feindbild*.

Zweitens, die *stereotypen* Formeln dienen dazu, die Petschenegen als rohe, kulturell rückständige, heidnische und militärisch gefährliche Barbaren darzustellen, die nur mit einer hochentwickelten Kriegstechnik besiegt werden konnten. Die Petschenegen erscheinen als eine in Horden organisierte politische Macht in der Aussenwelt von Byzanz. Einzelnen Stämmen dieses Volkes werden negative Eigenschaften zugeschrieben, die in Byzanz als *verwerflich* galten.

Drittens, das Feindbild bezieht sich einerseits auf die erzählte, unmittelbare Wirklichkeit, andererseits auf eine auf diese projizierte Vergangenheit. Dadurch, dass die Petschenegen mit den antiken Skythen (einem iranischen Volk) identifiziert werden und dabei archaische Klischee-Vorstellungen auf erstere übertragen werden, wird die erzählte, unmittelbare Wirklichkeit *verfremdet*. Ein Vergleich der Alexias mit den Ἰστωπται von Herodot zeigt, dass dieser Geschichtsschreiber einen eher nüchternen Beschrieb der Skythen liefert, der besonders geographisch, ethnographisch und militärisch ausgerichtet ist.⁴⁵ Dagegen ist Annas narratives "Skythen"-Bild sehr subjektiv und affektiv, um die verhassten Petschenegen zu *verteufeln*, ihren Vater (den Kaiser) aber noch mehr zu *heroisieren*. Die klassische Bezeichnung "Σκύθαι" war bei den Byzantinern fast gleichbedeutend mit dem von ihnen mit Vorliebe gebrauchten Ausdruck "βάρβαροι".

⁴⁵ Herodot IV 46—49, 64—66, 99—101, 121—122, 127—128.

Allerdings wurden mit dem Sammelbegriff *Σκύθαι* nur osteuropäische Völker genannt (so beispielsweise: Hunnen, Avaren, Chazaren, Bulgaren, Magyaren, Uzen, Kumanen usw.). Dieses Vorgehen war ein Weg zur Zähmung und Verharmlosung der Barbaren, indem diese in die Kategorie aus der Antike bekannter Völker eingefügt wurden, für die es auch bekannte Eigenschaften gab. Nach dem ungarischen Byzantinisten Gyula Moravcsik sind die *archaisierenden* Bestrebungen (besonders seit dem 11. Jh.) bezeichnend für die zunehmende Entfernung der Alltagssprache vom Altgriechischen und für die Nachahmung, die *mimesis*, der antiken Vorbilder.⁴⁶ Dementsprechend wird nicht nur der antike Name auf diese zeitgenössischen Völker übertragen, sondern werden auch Züge aus dem Formenschatz der antiken ethnographischen Beschreibungen ohne weiteres zur Charakterisierung der neuen Völker verwendet und auf sie übertragen. Auf die Weise gelangen fertigausbildete Schablonen und überlieferte Topoi zur Anwendung. Dies ist ausser in der zeitgeschichtlichen Monographie (*historia*) erst recht in den (panegyrischen) Reden der Fall.

Viertens, im Bild der Petschenegen im Byzanz des 12. Jahrhunderts ist die "Antike" durch den Faktor der *kulturell-ethnischen* und *militärischen Überlegenheit* über die Barbaren wirksam. Dagegen sind mit Ausnahme von Theophylaktos keine christlichen Elemente (wie z. B. *philanthropia*) im Fremdbild erkennbar. Die *Rhomäer* dachten und empfanden für den Fremden in erster Linie *griechisch* (und *römisch*) und nicht christlich. Durch die Bezeichnung als *barbaros* nimmt der Petschenege als Anderssprachiger in der Wertung des Normalmenschen eine Stellung *zwischen Mensch und Tier* ein: Einige seiner wichtigsten Charakteristika, die sich im Griechischen seit den Perserkriegen der Antike allmählich an das Wort *barbaros* angelagert haben, sind auch in unseren Texten vorhanden. Diese Eigenschaften sind nach Annas Worten "φυσικὸν παρακολούθημα" (d. h. Teil der Natur) der Barbaren oder wie sie an anderer Stelle sagt: "τὸ βάρβαρον ἅπαν" bzw. "πᾶν τὸ βάρβαρον γένος" (d. h. das ganze barbarische Ge-

⁴⁶ Moravcsik, G, Byzantinoturcica, II, Sprachreste der Türkvölker in den byzantinischen Quellen [Berliner Byzantinistische Arbeiten, 11], Berlin 1983, 13 f.

schlecht).⁴⁷ Dass aus einer solchen Einstellung ein Herrschaftsanspruch dessen abgeleitet werden kann, der für sich beansprucht, im Gegensatz zum Beherrschten an menschlicher Gesittung und Kultur teilzuhaben, ist nicht weiter verwunderlich. Mit dem gezielten Gebrauch des Begriffes *barbaros* könnte es nach Diether Reinsch vielleicht Anna für richtig befunden haben, "die kulturelle Überlegenheit der Byzantiner nachdrücklich als Überlegenheit einer *Sprachgemeinschaft* zu zeichnen. Ἑλληνίζειν [Griechisch sprechen — d. A.] war die Leitforderung des Bildungsideals, die Anna für ihre eigene Person und nach ihren eigenen Worten als erfüllt ansah. Ἑλληνίζειν war aber für sie dasselbe wie ῥωμαίζειν [Rhomäisch sprechen — d. A.]."⁴⁸ "Hellenische Bildung, ganz im antiken Sinne verstanden, galt im 12. Jahrhundert — wohl nicht ohne Einfluss der politischen Entwicklung — wieder als erstrebenswerte Bildungsideale. Je weniger die tatsächliche Lage Raum für hochtrabende politische Pläne und Ideen liess, desto mehr zog man sich zurück in den stillen Bereich der Bildung. Je mehr Idee und Wirklichkeit des Rhomäertums gegenstandslos wurden, desto mehr besann man sich auf das Hellenentum, dessen Wesen ja durch die von aussen drohenden Feinde nicht getroffen werden konnte." Wie sehr sich die Byzantiner selbst in Zeiten politischer Blüte kulturell als Hellenen gefühlt haben, zeigt sich in der Benennung ihrer Sprache, die bis 1453 stets die "hellenische" war (Anna Komnene, Ioannes Kinnamos, Niketas Choniates), während "rhomäisch" sich in diesem Fall nicht durchsetzen konnte.⁴⁹

Byzanz wahrte auch im 12. Jahrhundert die tradierte Barbaren-Vorstellung der Antike. Daher blieb dort auch der ererbte Gegensatz zur Welt der Barbaren immer in Geltung. Den überwiegend griechischsprachigen, von antiker Bildung und orthodoxem Christentum geprägten Rhomäern standen alle Nichtchristen als Barbaren gegenüber. Dies

⁴⁷ Alexias II 196, 21 f.; Reinsch, D. R., Ausländer und Byzantiner im Werk der Anna Komnene, in: Rechtshistorisches Journal 8 (1989) 257—274, hier 261.

⁴⁸ Alexias I 3, 10—13, III 218, 4—7, XV 7, 3—9; Reinsch, ebd. 262.

⁴⁹ Lechner, K., Hellenen und Barbaren im Weltbild der Byzantiner, Diss., München 1955, 58 (s. dort Beispiele).

zeigt sich gerade in unseren Quellen am Beispiel der Petschenegen sehr deutlich. In diesen historischen und rhetorischen Werken begegnen wir einer ausgesprochen antibarbarischen Topik,⁵⁰

2. Das Selbstverständnis der Rhomäer im Kontext des Petschenegen-Bildes

Wenn unsere Autoren über die Petschenegen sprechen, so geschieht dies meistens in einem Kontext des Vergleichs mit der eigenen, rhomäischen Seite. Es handelt sich dabei um drei Themen: Erstens, aus der Schilderung der Charaktereigenschaften und des militärischen Einsatzes der Barbaren spricht unmissverständlich die höhere Kultur des Rhomäers, des Hellenen, der jenem moralisch ("gerecht", "besser") und militärisch überlegen war.⁵¹ Gegen Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts war das Reich in ungleich stärkerer Weise als zuvor auf den Griechisch sprechenden *Rhomaioi* konzentriert. Dieser betrachtet sich nach Anna "als den eigentlichen Normalzustand des Menschen, von welchem alle anderen ἔθνη nur ein mehr oder weniger defizienter Modus sind".⁵² Annas Worten zufolge war die Herrschaft der Rhomäer (die sogen. βασιλεία τῶν Ῥωμαίων) von Natur aus (φύσει) Herrscherin (δεσπότης) über die anderen Völker (ἔθνη). Diese unterworfenen Völker stürzten sich, wenn sie eine Gelegenheit dazu bekamen, zu Wasser und zu Lande auf das Reich: "der Skythe" im Norden (Petschenegen und Kumanen), "der Kelte" im Westen (Normannen, fränkische Kreuzfahrer) und "Ismael" im Osten (Seldschuken).⁵³ Das Gefühl von jener byzantinischen Superiorität, von der Anna spricht, hat übrigens Reinsch auch in den Werken von Johannes

⁵⁰ Jouanno, C., Les barbares dans le roman byzantin du XII^e siècle. Fonction d'un topos, in: Byz 62 (1992) 264—300, hier 282.

⁵¹ Alexias II 123, 20—125, 20.

⁵² Reinsch, ebd. 258.

⁵³ Alexias XIV 7, 2 [III 173, 11—14 —Leib]; Altes Testament (AT), Gen 16, 11 ff.

Kinnamos und Niketas Choniates im Zusammenhang mit der Herrschaftszeit Kaiser Johannes' II. festgestellt.⁵⁴

Zweitens wird die Person des *Kaisers*, des Stellvertreters Gottes auf Erden, ins Zentrum gerückt: Alexios I. und Johannes II. erscheinen als *siegreiche Feldherren* und *Friedensbringer*, als *Ritter* und *Wohltäter*. Sie sind *Helden* in Sieg und Niederlage. Doch nicht nur sie, sondern auch die ganze *Armee* des *Gottesvolkes* der Rhomäer *triumphiert* letztlich über die Petschenegen.⁵⁵ Nach Theophylaktos liess das Bild des Kaisers "die Petschenegen von ihren Pferden absteigen und ihre Lanzen auf die Erde niederwerfen. Ihre wilde Natur wurde durch den göttlichen Charakter des Kaisers besiegt."⁵⁶ Niketas Choniates vielleicht die sogen. "Skythen" mit den *Truppen* von *Amalek*,⁵⁷ die laut dem Alten Testament (Ex 17, 9—14) von *Moses* zurückgeschlagen wurden: in unserem Fall war es Kaiser Johannes II. (Schlacht von 1122).

Drittens ist es die *politische Orthodoxie*, das Verständnis von *christlicher Weltherrschaft*, welches das Eigenbild prägt. In dem Moment, als sich die Petschenegen dem basileus *unterwarfen*, erklärten sie sich nach byzantinischer Auffassung auch bereit, den *Frieden* der *oikumene* zu respektieren.⁵⁸

Wie die bisherigen Ausführungen zeigen, erkennen wir im Kontext des Feindbildes das Selbstverständnis von "Byzanz", so wie es der Münchner Byzantinist August Heisenberg einmal auf den Punkt gebracht hat: das christlich gewordene Römerreich griechischer Nation. Doch neben dieser positiven Eigensicht lässt sich auch eine *negative* vermuten, die indirekt eine Art "Wunschprojektion" enthält. Die von Theophylaktos und Anna Komnene versteckt respektierten militäri-

⁵⁴ Reinsch, ebd. 260.

⁵⁵ Alexias II 94—103 (1088), 119 f. (1091), 129, 21 f., 132, 21 ff. Zur Sieges- und Triumphsymbolik s. Treitinger, O., Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee nach ihrer Gestaltung im höfischen Zeremoniell, Jena 1938 (ND Darmstadt 1956).

⁵⁶ Gautier, Theophylaktos 7, 8.

⁵⁷ Nik. Chon. 15, 92 f.

⁵⁸ Alexias II 132, 21 ff.

schen Eigenschaften (wie Schnelligkeit, Wendigkeit, Unerreichbarkeit und Mut) der Petschenegen einerseits und deren konstante numerische Überlegenheit andererseits dienen u. E. nicht nur der Stilisierung der kaiserlichen Hauptfigur zum Helden. Sie könnten vielleicht indirekt auch auf entsprechende Schwachstellen der Rhomäer vermuten lassen, deren Beheben hier als versteckter Wunsch interpretiert werden könnte. Dass die byzantinische Armee nach 1025 konstant vernachlässigt wurde, wissen wir.

3. Die Wahrnehmungsbereitschaft der Byzantiner gegenüber den Petschenegen. Die Rolle der Rhetorik

Die *Rhetorik* zeigt sich in unseren Quellen überall dort, wo die weltanschauliche Ebene, wo der historische *Protagonist* (der *basileus* und die *Rhomaioi*) und sein *Antagonist* (die *Patzinakitai* und ihre Anführer) angesprochen sind. In solchen dialektischen Situationen werden bewusst bestimmte Sprachausdrücke und Inhalte gebraucht, um das Gegenüber zu *verfremden*, ja um regelrecht ein *falsches* Bild zu zeichnen: die Rhetorik tritt als Dienerin der Propaganda auf und macht die Petschenegen gewissermassen zu "rhetorischen Opfern". Dabei haben wir es mit einer ausgesprochen *antibarbarischen Topik* zu tun. Die Charakterisierungen der Petschenegen sind beispielsweise von Anna entgegen all ihren anderslautenden Beteuerungen im Prooimion nicht "*sine ira et studio*" vorgenommen worden. Sie entsprachen vielmehr ihrer Absicht, die Leistung der Rhomäer und ganz besonders ihres Vaters herauszustellen: "ἐπιλάθεσθαι χρὴ εὐνοίας καὶ μίσους".⁵⁹

Die Rhetoren und Geschichtsschreiber waren sozusagen die *offiziellen Verkünder* der *mental*en Vorstellungen, die sich die Byzantiner von den Petschenegen machten. In diesen Anschauungen wird einerseits die *Grundordnung* der Welt (das eigene Bezugssystem) ausgedrückt (z. B. die sogen. "Familie der Könige"), andererseits mit Hilfe

⁵⁹ Ebd., Prooimion 2, 3.

von Stereotypen der Wunsch nach *Erniedrigung* und *nicht* eine *wirkliche Kenntnis* des anderen bezeugt. In dieser Grundordnung spiegelt sich die *kaiserliche Idee*, die auf den *Gegensätzen* zwischen dem Kaiser (als dem Herrn der Welt und Imitator Christi) und den fremden Stammesführern, zwischen den Rhomäern und den Petschenegen, ja zwischen den Hellenen und den Barbaren beruhten..

Die *Wahrnehmungsbereitschaft* der Byzantiner gegenüber den Petschenegen war abhängig von den *Normen*, die die Autoren steuerten. Das in der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Eigenbild entstandene und für die nationale Identität der Rhomäer nur förderliche Feindbild beruhte auf emotional gefärbten Stereotypen, die den Normbereichen *Politische Idee*, *Orthodoxie*, *Ethnie*, *Sprache*, *Kultur* und *Militär* zugeordnet werden können. Die eigene Gruppe wird als "*ausgewähltes Volk*" gesehen, und zwar auf der Basis eines *Universalismus*, der die eigene Daseinsform als "Menschsein an sich" *verabsolutiert*, und die daher als *einzig mögliche* betrachtet wird. Byzanz verstand sich langfristig als Innenwelt (gegenüber der Aussenwelt der Fremden), als Zentrum der *oikumene*. Als multinationale, heterogene Gemeinschaft, angeführt von den Hellenen, und als erste Hüterin der Orthodoxie sah sich das Rhomäerreich — in einer Entwicklung von Hellenen über Römer zu den Rhomäern — als *kulturell führend*. Diese Zivilisation beanspruchte für sich nur positive Werte mit Vorbildcharakter. Diese streng normierte Gesellschaft verstand sich — fast ohne jegliche Selbstkritik — als Normalität (mit Hang zu Selbstgefälligkeit). Mit dem Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl war, wie gerade das Feindbild deutlich macht, ein ausgeprägter *Ethnozentrismus* bestimmend, gelebt nach dem Prinzip "Wir und die anderen". Der Andere war der minderwertige und verachtenswerte Barbar, derjenige, der sich nicht der von Gott berufenen kaiserlichen Autorität unterwarf; er lebte ausserhalb der Grenzen der byzantinischen Zivilisation, ausserhalb des Planes Gottes auf Erden. Die Weltsicht des *Rhomaïos* im Zeitalter der Komnenen tolerierte die Aussenwelt in deren eigenen Existenz nur soweit, als diese der Sache der Rhomäer diene.

DAS FEINDBILD DER PETSCHENEGEN IM BYZANZ DER KOMNENEN 313
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Natürlich liesse sich hier die weiterführende Frage anknüpfen, ob und inwieweit gewisse Grundzüge dieses Feindbildes der Petschenegen nicht etwa schon in den von unseren Autoren benutzten byzantinischen Vorlagen des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts anzutreffen sind. Doch dies zu untersuchen, wird Aufgabe einer späteren Studie sein.

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